JUNE 27, 1975/75 CENTS
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

NewTimes

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NEW TIMES, June 27, 1975, Volume 4, Number 13

TOP OF THE NEWS

The stormy saga of weather mod Operating without effective public control, scientists and bureaucrats are toying with the sky above our heads. Sometimes they produce needed rain. Sometimes they produce disaster **By Hugh Gardner** page 20

Slansky's Believe It or Don't **By Paul Slansky** page 32

THESE ARE NEW TIMES

Coincidence Strange, seemingly fortuitous events—coincidences—may be letters in fate's alphabet, clues to an ultimate intent **By John Stickney** page 34

Cannonballing the continent In this country's foremost secret race, automotive madmen try to see who can drive from New York to California the fastest. Along the way, the entrants defy most laws of the highway—and most laws of gravity as well **By Timothy Carlson** page 42

LOCAL COLOR

Side Trips The stuff of dreams, **by Tom Cochrun;** A rousing old age, **by Thomas J. Moran** page 40

The Lazy B 3 in black and white For the past seven years, North Carolina officials have been prosecuting three black men for setting fire to a stable. As the case swelled into a symbol of government injustice, Reddy, Parker and Grant soon became martyrs for the radical cause. Now there is new evidence, and yet another trial is in the offing **By Lawrence Wright** page 54

Special Report What happened to Bill Mauldin's nose in Chi(na) town? **By Ron Dorfman** page 14

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Letters

Mounting debt

The article by Chris Welles ("A nation in hock," May 16) is a shameless piece of right-wing propaganda as well as a travesty of economics. Had Welles the meanest understanding of elementary economics, he would not have presented a single-cause theory as an explanation of our current economic woes.

Interestingly enough, manipulation of credit is inherently the most inequitable of all known economic tools. A shortage of available credit militates against the small businessman and especially against the individual householder whose needs for borrowed cash increase during times of recession rather than decrease. On the other hand, contraction of the monetary supply will hardly affect huge corporations who, as Welles suggests, ". . . with monopolistic and oligopolistic holds over their markets . . . are better able to insulate themselves from adversity." Naturally, I am not suggesting that economic dominance by a few large firms (200 of which control 66 percent of U.S. manufacturing assets) is the only cause of the American economic misery of the moment. It is, however, a more fruitful starting point than the one Welles has chosen.

Stephen Crabtree
Boston, Massachusetts

While reluctant to take potshots at a well-researched, lucidly written piece like this, Interbank would like to call attention to several of Mr. Welles' statements regarding installment credit which may have been taken out of context, hence are misleading.

For example, Mr. Welles states correctly that Master Charge reported $4.8 billion in outstanding balances at the end of last year, "up 27 percent from 1973." However, Mr. Welles neglects to mention that outstandings during 1972 rose 33 percent. Thus the 27 percent represents an overall *decline* in the rate of outstandings, not the staggering jump Mr. Welles' figure implies. Further, he goes on to say that Interbank reported "record losses from delinquencies" of $259 million. This is more than mere semantics: delinquencies are merely *past due accounts, not charge offs or losses.* To imply or state otherwise is totally misleading. Moreover, delinquencies during the critical recession year of 1974 rose an extremely modest one-tenth of a percent, from 4.5 to 5.4 percent of outstanding balances.

Timothy J. Connor, Public Relations
Interbank Card Association
New York City

Clairvoyance

I have just read the item "CBS To Pay Ford $50,000 For One-Hour Show" in your October 29, 1976, issue. My admiration for you is unbounded: Your investigative reporting is incredibly clairvoyant. I thought my arrangements for the payment to President Ford for a "one-hour memoir" were a well-kept secret locked only in my bosom. Congratulations on a truly remarkable journalistic scoop.

Richard S. Salant
President, CBS News
New York City

Last night, after I had mailed my yesterday's letter to you about the item in your October 29, 1976, issue, I suddenly woke up profoundly bewildered. Perhaps you could dissipate my intense puzzlement: Since the report was in your October 29, 1976, issue, why in the world did it take you so long to come upon the "facts" involving a broadcast which occurred on April 12, 1976—over six months before the date of your issue? Maybe you weren't so clairvoyant as I had thought.

Help!

Bewildered.

Richard S. Salant
President, CBS News
New York City.

Lost in time

I thoroughly enjoyed Sam Merrill's reporting on Silva Mind Control ("Under control," May 2), and perhaps I can answer one of the questions he poses in his article, regarding a half-hour "lost" from his memory. In the course of earning my diploma from the Professional Hypnotists of Detroit in 1968, I found that a "lost" time block can be recalled and explored with the help of a qualified hypnotist, even if a previous hypnotist has given a "post" forbidding it.

Self-hypnosis, which is the very evident basis of the Mind Control system, is after all a helping tool, not a panacea.

Rev. Eugene Whitney
Peterson, Iowa

Sort of canceled

We are charter subscribers to *New Times* and although we haven't always agreed with what you've published we have found your magazine informative and entertaining and look forward to each issue. However, after reading Mr. King's article on "Dog tyranny" (Fulminations, May 2), we would like to cancel our subscription. Mr. King has a right to his opinion, but we don't feel we should have to contribute through our subscription to the salary of a man we find so sick and disgusting.

As a point of informaton, you might tell Mr. King that you don't "sort of" kill something any more than you "sort of" get your wife pregnant.

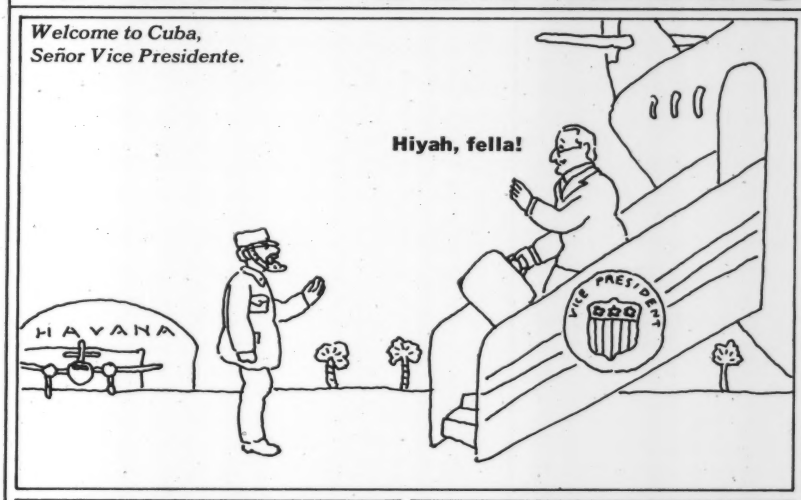
Dr. and Mrs. J.M. Dishman
Portland, Oregon

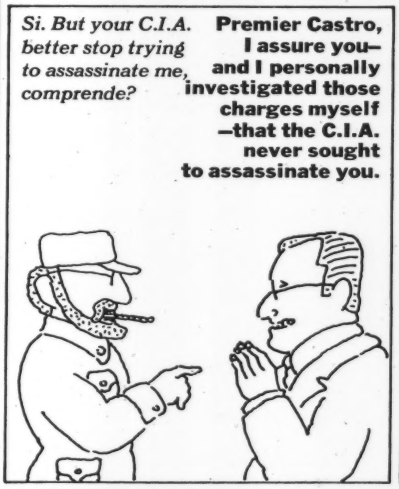
New Look for New Times

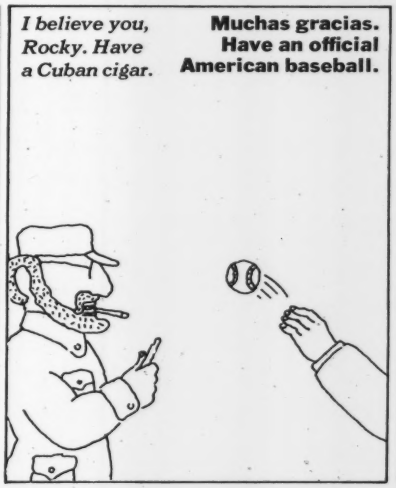
With this issue *New Times* inaugurates a new logo and redesigned headlines for our columns and regular features. Art director Steve Phillips says he "wanted to get across an active, bold, contemporary feeling. I think the design of *New Times* should keep changing—just as editorial emphasis changes—to reflect the changes in the world around us." We hope you like the new look as much as we do.

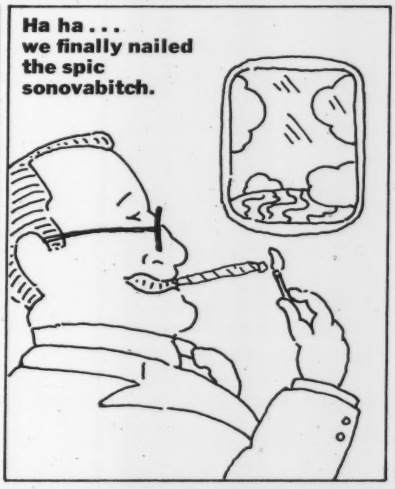
By Stuart Hample & Seymour Chwast

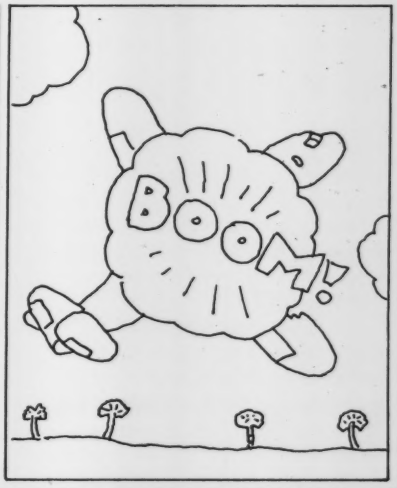
Fellow Americans




Si. But your C.I.A. better stop trying to assassinate me, comprende?
Premier Castro, I assure you– and I personally investigated those charges myself –that the C.I.A. never sought to assassinate you.







Goodnight, America

Slow Down

By James S. Kunen

I turned on *Good Night America*—this was several months ago—to see John F. Kennedy get his head blown off. I did this of my own volition, so I suppose I shouldn't complain, but something about it bothered me, still bothers me.

I suppose it *shouldn't* bother me. I've seen John Kennedy get killed before, and no doubt I'll see him get killed again.

It must have been the way it was pre ted. The show had three half-ho egments. The first was an intervie quel Welch. That was followed by a fi ed visit by Geraldo Rivera to the Be muda Triangle. And the final half-hour comprised a screening and discussion of Abraham Zapruder's famous home movie of John Kennedy's death in Dallas. Roll 'em: the black Lincoln rounds the bend to the inevitable. Then a slow-motion instant replay: See him pitch forward? See the impact? *Had* to be shots from the grassy knoll!

I can still remember having feelings. I can still remember November 22, 1963, just where I was, just what I was doing, when the horror descended on us, when the chaos began. I *felt* loss. Sadness. Grief. A man who had meant something to me, a man of whom I was fond, had been murdered.

A dozen years have passed, and I guess we get over these things. But it strikes me as lacking something in sensitivity and respect to lump John Kennedy's murder together with a sex star interview and a "supernatural" piece, as though they were all equal. I expected a public outcry, and there was one, of sorts, in Dallas. The ABC affiliate there declined to air that particular *Good Night America*—and received hundreds of calls demanding that it be shown.

It's not that Americans are bloodthirsty; the assassination is not perceived as having anything to do with blood, or flesh, or a human being. The assassination is not seen as a real event at all, but as the reflection of an event, a prismatic glimpse of the unseen, unknown world of conspiracy. As people focus their attention on conspiracies, they seem to lose sight of everything else. And Americans can't get enough of conspiracies these days. Everything is a front for the CIA. Or is the CIA a front for everything? The important point is that nothing is what it seems; everything hides something else.

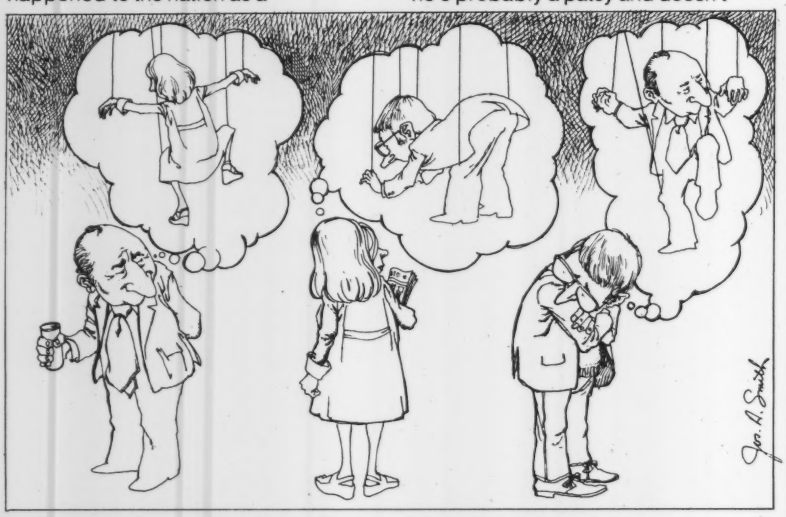
Conspiracies used to be the business of skittish old people on city streets. They'd rail against the machinations of unseen powers, because they'd lost control over their lives.

Apparently, this is what's happened to the nation as a whole—we've lost control. The '70s are an era of powerlessness. We cling to the '60s because we were powerful then—all of us. The government felt it could stop history in Asia. The Left felt it could stop the government. Everybody was strong. Now the government is reduced to beating up on Cambodia, and what was the Left is absorbed not with taking power or opposing power but with speculating on where power lies.

We look for, we *need*, secret agents in control *somewhere*. Better unseen omnipotent conspirators than the ineffectual little fools we see floundering about in positions of power.

The trouble with conspiracy theorizing as a means of coping with our powerlessness is that it perpetuates it. To attempt to influence events is deemed futile, because one does not presume to know what is actually happening. A fellow from Wisconsin wrote in to *New Times*, "People continue to buy the notion that the power to vote really means something in a country run by a cabal bigger then the Kennedy's, bigger than the Supreme Court, bigger than Congress itself. The polling booth, like religion, is a place for the very old or the very dumb."

I'm half ready to believe that guy's part of the cabal himself, though he's probably a patsy and doesn't know it. What better way for the Conspirators to gain control than for us to think they already *are* in control, and thus relinquish control to them? (Of course, you don't know where *I* fit into this, either. I could be trying to throw you off.) See how interesting this gets! Leaves parcheesi way behind.



Oh. Did you say someone got killed? Someone we loved lost his life? I think I saw something about that on TV a while ago. Had something to do with Raquel Welch in Bermuda. . . .

I remember back in 1963, I thought the murder of John Kennedy was such an enormity that America would never be the same. Now his assassination is grist for late-night entertainment. I guess I was right. ●

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9. Harlequin
10. Watership Down

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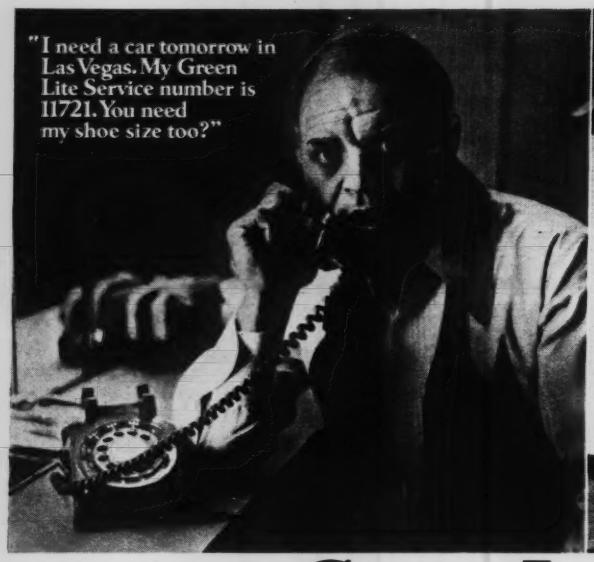

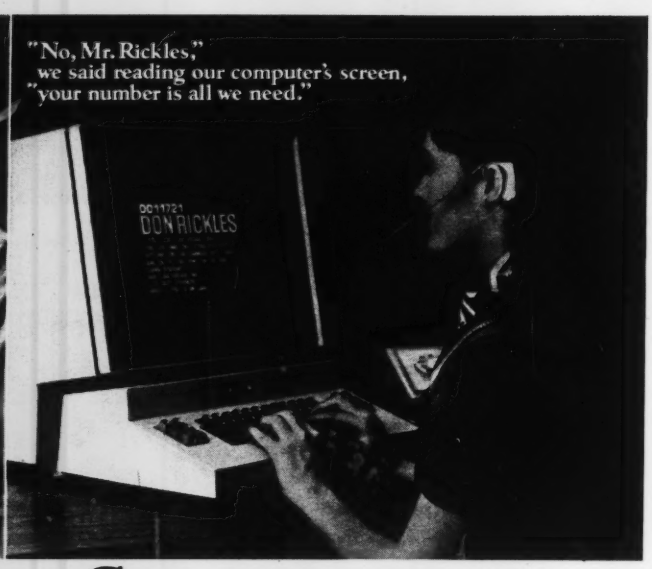

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Closing the Open Door

Fulminations

By Larry L. King

Back there when the nation was numb to the bone and licking wounds administered by the Nixon Gang, our new—if accidental—President vowed that his would be an "open door" policy. Yessir, good ol' Jerry Ford would usher in "an era of straight talk." No more fibs. Harry Truman's bust was symbolically brought up from the basement, dusted off and prominently installed in a White House promising a return to the candors of old. Sad to say, that decent vow now has been flung down and danced on.

From the outset, nothing felt right about the Rockefeller Commission's investigation of Central Intelligence Agency improprieties. Skeptics were alerted when it became apparent that the President had heavily weighted the Commission with members owing old loyalties to the intelligence apparatus. It did not assist public confidence when Chairman Rockefeller, himself long a member of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, fretted of his duty to ensure that no damage might accrue to "a very important organ of national security." Quite clearly, the blue-ribbon panel would be tickled pink to return a gentlemanly whitewash. But with meddlesome senators and reporters increasingly turning up new evidence of official dirty tricks, the institutional cheese got a little binding. That's when the verbal footwork began.

Originally, when President Ford asked Rocky and his pals to go outside their founding mandate and look into CIA involvement in political assassinations abroad, we were told the matter would be vigorously pursued. Then, mysteriously, Rocky said the Commission's charter had expired: it therefore wouldn't be possible to complete the assassination inquiry. This begged the question of why the President, by a scratch of his pen, had failed to extend the Commission's life. Next, Rocky said the "incomplete" assassination data would *not* be included in the Commission's official report—again a reversal of earlier promises. Nor, said he and the President, would such data be made public. This decision, naturally, was based on "national security considerations": seems to me I've heard that song before. It is a strange tune to be piped by the crew of the good ship *Truthful*, having served so many soiled banners of the past.

Let us peer through the smoke screen at other obvious inconsistencies:

— Top White House staffers, including Donald Rumsfeld, are openly furious at Rocky for his promise to include assassination materials in his official report. Why? That action appeared to be consistent with the President's earlier desire. Even as Ford's men rant against Rocky, Ford himself claims a perfect understanding with his veep: they have been in "constant contact." Yeah, well, then, one of them must have been speaking Chinese. All the President's men do not revile the Vice-President unless they know the President himself is angry.

— Even as Senator Frank Church says he has "hard evidence" of CIA assassination involvement, Rocky proclaims to have found no "major violations" by the CIA.

President Ford, on the other hand, is referring the Rockefeller Commission Report to the Attorney General "to make a judgment as to whether there should be any prosecution." In the matter of guilt, therefore, Senator Church seems to vote yes, Rocky votes no and the President votes maybe.

— The President by inference has indicated that "from late 1959. . . running up through 1967 or '68" there may have been assassination talk in high government councils. He even asks congressional sources privy to such information to exercise "prudence and caution"—to button up. Yet he himself will "pass no judgment on decisions made by honorable men under unusual circumstances." Should you get the impression your President may be refusing to pass judgment on the official condoning of political murder, he has only himself to blame.

One cannot imagine *any* information being more harmful to the cause of restoring public confidence than the thousands of words of Non-Speak now employed by an Administration pledged to "an era of straight talk." If sheriff LBJ, the martyred Kennedy or even kindly old Ike permitted or encouraged political murder, then give it to us straight and let us be about a healthy debunking of myths and fables. If they did not, then it is cruel and dishonest to pretend they may have. And if there is a third farfetched possibility—that CIA officials themselves conceived of murder as a political tactic and managed to keep three presidents in the dark—then let us in God's name dismantle the headquarters at Langley, Virginia, and start anew.

It helps only minimally that Mr. Ford declares himself opposed to political murder. The utterances of our public officials no longer comfort; we require evidence that talk is no longer cheap. As long as we fail to learn who said what to whom, even to the extent that the President and his top staffers tell different tales about the President's temper with respect to the Vice-President, it is but folly to expect our trust. ●

Why Haldeman is "astonished";
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EDITED BY
TONY SCHWARTZ

The Insider

Power Politics

The $100,000 question

Ever since the CBS news special "Haldeman: The Nixon Years, Conversations with Mike Wallace" there has been speculation about how much money the former Nixon aide

WIDE WORLD

Haldeman and Wallace: $100,000 connection

received for his appearance. A source who talks with Haldeman regularly has now revealed that the figure was $100,000—at least twice most published estimates. The contract stipulated a $50,000 payment for each of the two hour-long broadcasts.

A call to CBS brought a swift denial. A spokesman there declined to name a specific figure but said that $100,000 was "outrageous." We asked our source to check again with Haldeman. Haldeman stood by the $100,000 figure, said the checks had been cashed and told our source he was "astonished" by CBS' denial.

Disclosing Gurney

The Senate has quietly denied a U.S. Attorney's subpoena of one of its former member's financial records. The case involves Edward Gurney (R-Fla.), who resigned last year under the pressure of a grand jury probe. He is currently on trial for allegedly maintaining an illegal $235,000 campaign fund during his planned 1974 election race, and the prosecution believes his financial records are an integral part of the case.

Senators are required by their own rules to file yearly statements of net worth with that body. Ironically, the rules forbid public disclosure of the data even in cases of a criminal nature. The 61-year-old Gurney's trial has been going on for four months in Tampa, Fla., and a jury there has been told an elaborate tale of official corruption, political kickbacks and payoffs. Gurney aides James Groot and Larry Williams have testified that they solicited campaign contributions from private contractors in exchange for promises of favored Federal Housing Administration treatment.

A number of senators—including Ethics Committee Chairman Howard Cannon (D-Nev.)—believe that the "surrender of a disclosure statement will jeopardize the whole system of Senatorial disclosure." At least one senator, however, is fighting that notion. William Roth (R-Del.) has introduced a resolution that would force the Senate to turn over Gurney's

WIDE WORLD

Gurney: Senate shelter?

records. Any claim of "executive privilege," says Roth, "makes a mockery and a sham of the whole process of submitting financial disclosure statements."

Graham cracker

Later this month a 54-year-old woman will go on trial in Charlotte, North Carolina. The charge is "simple assault" and it carries a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail or a $250 fine. The defendant is Ruth Graham, better

WIDE WORLD

Graham: would this woman commit a crime?

known as the wife of Rev. Billy Graham.

The unlikely story goes like this:

On May 20 President Ford stopped in Charlotte to make a speech, and Mrs. Graham was in the front row to cheer him on. Ford's talk had just begun when Mrs. Graham discovered a demonstrator at her side. She promptly grabbed his sign, planted it beneath her white pump shoes and refused to give it back.

"I was simply acting instinctively," Mrs. Graham told reporters later. "The man had every right to his opinion, but when the President of the United States is speaking, it is definitely not the place to express his opinion."

The demonstrator, a 28-year-old woodcarver named Dan Pollock, had been carrying a two-sided sign that

read "Eat the Rich" and "Don't Tread on Me." After it was grabbed, Pollock politely requested its return. "He looked rather helpless and harmless," Mrs. Graham explained. "I just patted him on the shoulder and shook my head."

Pollock's version of the incident is a bit different. He has charged Mrs. Graham with "taking my sign and pushing me away."

Ironically, several members of the group to which Pollock belongs—the Red Hornets Mayday tribe—recently lost a civil suit in federal court in which they were on the other side. They claimed to have been forcibly and illegally excluded from a 1971 Charlotte appearance by former President Nixon and . . . you guessed it, the Rev. Billy Graham.

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water

When the first planeload of Vietnamese refugees arrived recently at Ft. Indiantown Gap, in the lush Pennsylvania Dutch valley, the government rolled out its welcoming mat. There were 1,800 Army troops on hand, 500 civilians, a high school band, local politicians, red roses and plastic frisbees. To top it off, 40 Vietnamese language experts were brought in from Ft. Bragg to help ease the communication barrier.

There was only one hitch. Seems one "expert" was assigned to paint a sign in Vietnamese reading:

MARK CHESTER/BLACK STAR

Refugees: sign of the times

"Please do not flush diapers down the toilet." He finished the task, posted the sign and left. A short time later, after most of the Vietnamese had wandered back into the barracks, word filtered out that they were incensed. The translation unfortunately had been garbled. The expert had actually written: "Please do not flush babies down the toilet."

Frankly deceptive

Our nomination for the scandal least likely to be investigated by Congress is its own political abuse of the 200-year-old franking privilege. That's

UPI

Gude: "Congratulations on registering to vote. . ."

the right senators and representatives have to send their "official mail" for free, merely by putting their signature where the rest of us have to put a stamp.

The most recent development is that the Senate has installed a huge computer facility to churn out targeted mass mailings—often transparently political in intent—to selected groups. Congress is now mailing at the rate of about 330 million pieces a year, or roughly two and a half letters for every American of voting age. The cost approached $37 million last year, or about $68,000 for every member of Congress. The taxpayer foots the bill, and the spending isn't counted against limits on campaign outlays. Recent "reforms" of frank mail have amounted to window-dressing.

Here, for example, are some practices by congresspersons held to be legal under the present law. Rep. Gilbert Gude (R-Md.) routinely sends form letters to persons who have just registered to vote, congratulating them and offering his services as a congressman. The law allows free mailing of congratulatory messages, and registering to vote was held to be a noteworthy public achievement. Congressman Gene Taylor (R-Miss.) sent form letters to teachers in his district two months prior to the election, touting his own support of federal aid to schools in the area. An official protest was filed, but the letter was held to be related to the representative's official duties.

The most outrageous example, of course, is Frank Clark, the former Pennsylvania congressman defeated in November. Congresspersons are permitted a 90-day grace mailing period after leaving office, in which to take care of unfinished business. Clark, however, had been using his privilege to send out newsletters under his name, deceptively entitled "Your congressman reports . . . ."

Media

Anchoring women

ABC could soon become the first network to use a female anchorperson on the national news. Executive Producer Av Westin's return to the evening news show is expected to lead to a Washington bureau shakeup as part of ABC's effort to catch CBS in the rating race.

"ABC would like to be the first network to use a woman in that kind of senior role," says Westin. Coincidentally, Howard K. Smith's imminent move into a Sevareid-style commentator role will create the necessary opening alongside Harry Reasoner. The leading contender is believed to be CBS reporter Leslie Stahl, the only journalist with whom

UPI

Stahl: first anchorwoman?

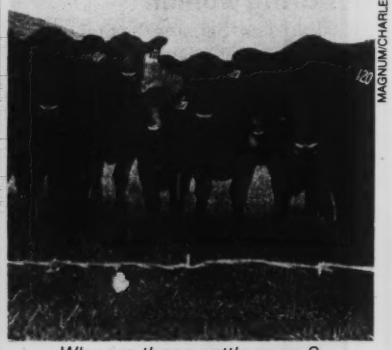
Westin is said to have already spoken. Several other candidates are also in the running, though, including NBC's Cassie Mackin, ABC's Hilary Brown and CBS' Connie Chung.

Off The Record

Food poisoning fiasco

Two years ago, the Michigan Chemical Company accidentally filled a series of 50-pound bags with a toxic fire-retardant instead of the intended dairy feed supplement. That mistake set off a disastrous chain of contamination that even today has not been fully halted.

The first stirrings were heard from some of the 600 farmers who had



MAGNUM/CHARLES GATEWOOD

Why are these cattle angry?

begun feeding their livestock the contaminated feed. Dairy farmers—whose herds got the highest doses of the toxic polybrominate biphenyl (PBB)—watched helplessly while milk production dropped. Some cows aborted, others died giving birth and calves began appearing stillborn.

For almost a year, the feed distributor, Farm Bureau Services, insisted it could find nothing wrong. Even after the Bureau helped conduct a feeding study in which half the calves died, no action was taken. Then came the first report that a human had been affected. Michigan farmer Albert Vanderwall began suffering from symptoms including erratic blood pressure, dizzy spells, numbness, pain in the upper abdomen and severe weight loss. A doctor's examination showed that PBB was the only toxic substance in his body, and Vanderwall has now filed a $5 million damage suit.

Finally, in the spring of 1974, the Food and Drug Administration seized a shipment of milk in a Southern state and traced its contamination back to the Michigan PBB. At first, the Michigan Department of Public Health mounted a campaign to reassure the public that PBB was "no established threat to human health." This position didn't change when an independent researcher, Dr. Thomas Corbett, revealed that a study on mice showed a possible link between PBB and birth defects.

Rather than destroying all contaminated animals and feed pending more conclusive data, the FDA chose instead to put "conservative" limits on the amount of allowable PBB in any food product. To date, 1.5 million chickens, 15,000 dairy cows, 3,500 swine and 500 sheep have been destroyed. In addition, an estimated 90 percent of the state's human population may have eaten food containing PBB.

The scandal persists. Although most PBB-containing products have been removed from the market, traces have shown up in at least one mill this year. In the meantime, lacking any substantive further research, Michigan consumers will simply have to hold their breath and hope.

Mind & Body

By Marion Steinmann

Football psyche

Could a broken leg be psychosomatic? Doctors have long known that illness frequently follows in the wake of stress and that psychology can affect physiology. Now a research group at the University of Washington in Seattle has found evidence that even sports injuries may be psychologically triggered.

Dr. Steven Bramwell surveyed 82 players on the University of Washington varsity football team, and assigned each one a score based on events in their lives that had required "coping" during the previous two years. These events included breaking up with a girlfriend, changing team position, trouble with coaches and the illness or death of a close friend or relative. When Bramwell correlated the players' "Life Change" scores with their injury records, he discovered that among those with the highest scores, 73 percent had been injured seriously enough in the course of the three-month playing season to miss three practices and/or one game. The injury figure for those whose lives had undergone the smallest amount of change dropped to 30 percent.

"The effect of life change may be to hinder crucial concentration (i.e., sensing a blind-side block), or to cause "freezing up in potentially damaging situations," Bramwell concluded.

Seventies

Destiny's calling

After prayers, jokes, recipes and political propaganda by telephone, why not readings on the future? Bill Brown is a former stockbroker and skeptic who sees his new phone-in horoscope firm as a logical union of astrology and modern technology.

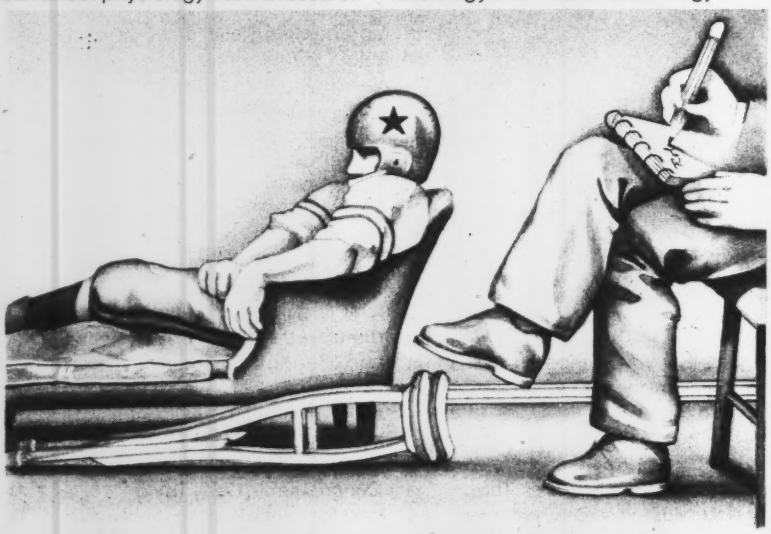


ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN McGRATH

By using a computer to calculate the position of the planets, Brown has become known as a stickler for accuracy, a maverick among fellow astrologers and a big success with everyone else. Up to 40 new clients a day, six days a week, are calling Astro-Phone's toll-free number to feed in the exact time and place of their birth. Among the notable clients, says Brown, have been the British Broadcasting System, which called for a reading on the future of the Labour government (using the date it came into existence) and *Newsweek*, which asked for an outlook on the nation (using a July 4, 1776, birthdate). An average reading—$9.95 for the first ten minutes, a dollar a minute thereafter—runs about 15 minutes.

ILLUSTRATION BY CATHY HULL

The readings, says Brown, give short- and long-term trends—"like a road map, you get choices but how they are used is up to the individual." Current clients are two-thirds women, most with personal problems. "A fairly typical woman wanted a compatibility reading," recalls house astrologer Nicki Michaels. "But not on her husband. She knew they were incompatible and wanted one on her lover instead."

Respect: down the tube

What is America's most respected community institution? (A) Schools; (B) Churches; (C) Police; (D) Local governments; (E) None of the above.

The correct response is E. According to a recent poll, the real answer—astonishingly—is television. The ninth in an annual series of Roper Inc. polls found that 71 percent of Americans gave television a "good" or "excellent" performance rating. The church was next at 66 percent, followed by the police at 65 percent.

Watergate revelations may have contributed to the continuing decline in respect for local government—which went from 44 percent last year to 35 percent in this most recent national sample. On the other hand, the investigative contributions of newspapers during the last two years apparently have not enhanced their prestige; the Roper performance rating for newspapers dropped from 64 to 58 percent.

The annual poll, done for the network-supported Television Information Office, also revealed that television-watching continues to increase. Daily viewing time by the typical adult was up from 2 hours, 50 minutes to 3 hours, 2 minutes. Viewing by college-educated and upper-income individuals also set records, at 2:23 and 2:47, respectively.

Guidelines from the sidelines

Textbooks just aren't going to be the same. Four publishing houses have now issued guidelines designed to eliminate sexual and racial stereotypes from textbooks used in schools. Macmillan Inc.'s 25,000-word pamphlet is by far the most ambitious effort to date, and after reading the decidedly serious guidelines, it's hard to know whether to be embarrassed by the need for them, amused by their absurdity or heartened by the honorable motivation that produced them. What follows are just a few examples:

"Chinese students [need not] always be depicted as majoring in mathematics";

"When discussing urban problems, include the role of white people";

"Jews should be included in a matter-of-fact way in accounts of America's development. Do not convey astonishment at their active participation";

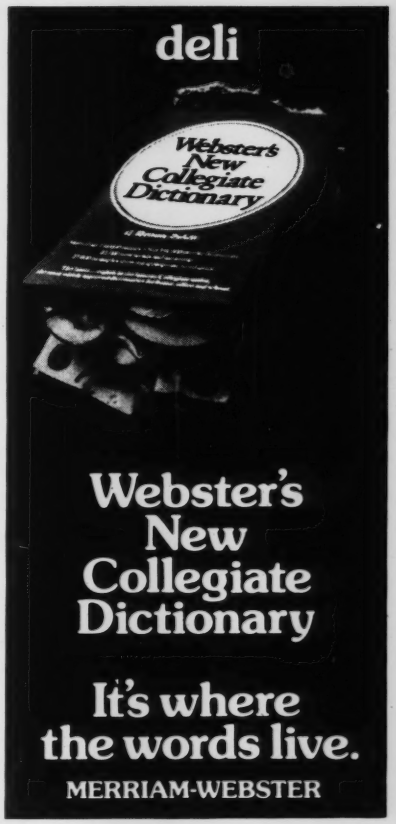
"Stories about [Spanish families] should center around problems more common than tangles with the law."

The full text is available—free—from Macmillan.

Does sex rate?

"The human being naturally places sexual intercourse far and away above all other joys . . . . From youth to middle age all men and women prize copulation above all other pleasures combined."

So said Mark Twain. Times have changed, however, and now two Maryland psychologists have arrived at a conclusion that is bound to be



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controversial: females just don't like sex as much as males. Paul Cameron and Patt Fleming asked a random sample of 2,000 men and women to rank the pleasurability of 22 daily activities—among them sex, eating, traveling, watching television, church-going, smoking and housework. Anonymous responses were collected in three cities—Los Angeles, Louisville and Hollywood, Maryland.

All men up to age 55 rated sex either first or second, and it won out most clearly among those between ages 26 and 39.

For women, however, the survey told a different story. In no age group did they rank sex as the most pleasurable activity. Women up to age 39 all rated music, nature, family and travel ahead of sex. Middle-age women—40 to 55—ranked even such activities as housework, sleeping and television-watching ahead of sex.

For both men and women, increasing age was closely correlated with a decreasing pleasure derived from sex. The youngest group of men, for instance, to markedly deemphasize its importance, was that between ages 55 and 64. That group rated it eighth—in a tie with sports.

Cameron's findings, however, were attacked by women at a recent meeting of the Midwest Psychological Association where he presented them. A number of participants suggested that on the subject of sex women might be answering more as they thought they should than on the basis of genuine feeling.

The psychologist enjoyed the controversy but was not swayed by it, and made only a wry concession. "I think women would enjoy sex more," he suggested, "if men performed adequately."

Special Report

What happened to Bill Mauldin's nose in Chi(na)town

By Ron Dorfman

Cartoonists have been known to put the noses of politicians out of joint, but it rarely occurs the other way around. Wouldn't you know that when man bites dog, it would happen in Chicago, and in good old Second City style.

Bill Mauldin, twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize, celebrated among World War II vets as the creator of Willie and Joe and still going strong as one of the nation's first-rank political cartoonists, was having dinner at the Lake Shore Drive home of his friend John Trezevant, executive vice-president of the Field newspapers. Charles Kinkle, the doorman in Trezevant's building and an admirer of Mauldin, rang up on the intercom; Kinkle likes to kid Mauldin about his habit of wearing cameras wherever he goes, but this time he had a tip: "a bunch of politicians" were double-parked in the street and the cops seemed about to tow their cars away. A rare sight indeed, one which Mauldin agreed needed recording.

When the dinner party arrived at street level, the cops were ticketing about 20 double-parked cars for towing. "But then," a witness told reporters, "all kinds of police cars started to arrive and told the police to knock it off."

Mauldin said he was on the sidewalk when a man behind the wheel of a double-parked white station wagon waved to him, "to get my attention," and then gave him the finger. Mauldin shot two pictures, he and the subject grinning at each other,

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

but suddenly the man got out of his car, kicked Mauldin in the balls and smashed his camera into his face, breaking the cartoonist's nose.

The assailant took off down the street and disappeared around the corner while Trezevant urged the onlooking cops to pursue him. But the cops seemed to be more interested in learning why Mauldin had been taking pictures. Mauldin showed them his press card and two cops took off after the fleeing goon. "I wouldn't classify it as hot pursuit of the suspect," said John Gordon, another of Trezevant's dinner guests.

A witness observing the scene from an apartment on the corner told reporters she had seen the two cops return to the corner with the assailant, but that a man in a light green suit, who she said had been "sort of in charge of the parking operations all night," came up and exchanged a few words with the arresting officers. A few moments later the officers no longer had a prisoner. They later reported that they'd been unable to capture the assailant, who had got into a taxi and fled.

A license check on the white station wagon showed it belonged to Eugene Nolan, a captain in the Chicago Police Department. Capt. Nolan, head of the labor detail and a former bodyguard of Mayor Daley, was, along with the owners of the other double-parked cars, attending a party given by James and Thomas Flanagan for the mayor's son John and John's fiancée, Mary Lou Briatta, daughter of a minor syndicate hood who is a summer-season neighbor of the Daleys at Grand Beach, Mich., and a brother-in-law of John D'Arco, Democratic committeeman of the First Ward and the Mob's connection at City Hall. The Flanagan brothers, partners in the Evanston insurance firm of Heil & Heil, had employed young Daley a couple of years ago and had been rewarded with $2 million of Chicago's municipal insurance business, on which young Daley earned a reported $100,000 commission. In response to

questions about the deal, the mayor had invited reporters to make use of the mistletoe attached to his coattails. The expression "kiss my mistletoe" thus entered the local political lexicon as a snappier, more readily printable, version of the "kiss my ass" the mayor had uttered on other occasions when asked about things he didn't want to be asked about.

Mike Royko, enterprising as always, located the Flanagan boys' mother in Florida. It seems that some old-timers remembered that their late father, Mike Flanagan, had been a good pal of Dick Daley—thus the connection of the sons—but no one knew much about him. "Or at least, nothing was said," Royko wrote.

"My husband," said the senior Flanagan's plain-spoken Finnish ex-wife, "was a racketeer." Operator of 13 large books, with cops, judges and politicians on his payroll, Flanagan had also become a straw-boss in the bloody newspaper circulation wars. He died in 1960, two years after retiring as division superintendent in the circulation department of the Chicago *Tribune*.

But back to Mauldin's nose and Capt. Nolan's car. Capt. Nolan did not fit the description of Mauldin's attacker, and the police hypothesized hopefully that the man was one of the well-dressed auto thieves who supposedly operate in the neighborhood. But the *Sun-Times* offered a $2,500 reward, and other local media kept the heat on. One of Mauldin's photos showed a distorted picture of the man through the auto windshield,and the *Sun-Times'* ace crime reporter, Art Petacque, thought he recognized him. It was only a matter of time.

A few days later, the thug surrendered: none other than Tom Flanagan himself, the host of the party. Flanagan did not confess guilt, mind you, but only admitted that he was the person involved in the altercation. (Flanagan was apparently about to start moving the double-parked cars when the incident occurred.) Then he swore out a cross-complaint against Mauldin, charging battery. The case comes up for trial June 12.

The mayor was furious. It was disgusting enough when his son's engagement was announced back in April and the damn *Daily News* had dragged up all that business about Lou Briatta being named before the Senate Rackets Committee as one of 300 full-time syndicate hoods in Chicago, and now these two nice young people were having their engagement party spoiled and all that insurance stuff was being raked up again. He'd fix those press bastards.

The Daley-Briatta nuptials, originally scheduled for late June, were secretly moved up to May 28. Daley snuck out of City Hall, eluding reporters who thought he was on his way upstairs to a City Council meeting. But there were more than 300 guests for the luncheon reception, word leaked and reporters, photographers and TV crews showed up for both the wedding and the reception. Refused entry, they climbed ladders to observe the wedding mass, concelebrated by six priests, through church windows. It was all over the front pages that afternoon, including police mug shots of Tom Flanagan. *Sun-Times* columnist Bob Greene noted that elsewhere in the world the weddings of the children of politicians are reported on the society pages, while in Chicago it was a job for crime reporters. ●

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Some recent roars.

Every two weeks, NEW TIMES comes along with a stick or two of dynamite in its fist.

There was our story on "The Ten Dumbest Congressmen," with NEW TIMES' nomination for King of Dumb. You should have heard the screams on that one, including a well-attended press conference called by the King himself. There was "Prescription Payola," about doctors who are willing to risk your life for a color TV. There was "Southie Is My Home Town," a look at the people of South Boston you didn't find in any of the other media. (After a century of getting the shaft, maybe they had reasons for coming off as brawling racists.)

In "The Little Camera That Couldn't," NEW TIMES dissected Polaroid's SX-70, as a symbol of a consumer economy gone wild. In "A Wallace Is a Wallace Is a Wallace," we looked underneath the new moderate George and found—guess what—the same old George. In "Happy Days Are Here Again," we saw the new depression as upbeat—a chance for new lifestyles and the whole Whole Earth thing. In "Zen and the Art of the Perfect Backhand," we told you how to trust your body and ignore your old tennis instructor.

"The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off the big restaurant rip-off that's serving up mass-produced frozen dishes as expensive house specialties. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill just about anybody they want to. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

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The Mouse that Roars

The stormy saga of weather mod

By Hugh Gardner

Everybody gripes about the weather but nobody does anything about it, right? Wrong.

Two new technologies powerful enough to change the destiny of the planet have come along since the Second World War. One, of course, is nuclear fission. The other, weather modification, involves even greater amounts of energy. Compared to the incalculably powerful heat engine that drives our global weather, all the nuclear devices in the world are just so many firecrackers. Even a small thunderstorm has the energy of a hydrogen bomb.

Consider the following: A few years ago, Russian scientists proposed spreading black coal dust over vast stretches of the Siberian Arctic. The Russian goal was to melt the icepack by increasing the absorption of heat at the earth's surface, thereby increasing the extent of their farmlands. But other scientists argued fiercely against the project. Its probable result, they warned, would be to bring down a new Ice Age elsewhere on our beleaguered planet.

Weather modification is clearly no toy. Its potential for harm is enormous. When weather mod was being promoted in Congress in the '50s and '60s, it was often referred to as The Ultimate Weapon. Already it has been used to wage war in Indochina. Strong evidence links reckless weather modification to the calamitous Rapid City flood of 1972, which killed more than 200 people. But, despite these and other signals demanding caution, weather mod is simply out of control—carried on virtually without regulation. The living laboratory for these experiments is the sky above you.

Operating without effective public control, scientists and bureaucrats are toying with the sky above our heads. Sometimes they produce needed rain. Sometimes they produce disaster

The Many Heads of Hydra

In fiscal year 1972, the latest year for which complete figures are available, a total of 195 weather modification projects were going on in America under the sponsorship of the U.S. government. Eleven different federal agencies were involved—if the three branches of the military are counted separately and the secret operations of the CIA are included.

In total projects, the Department of Transportation led with 49. Most of these projects are part of D.O.T.'s "Climate Impact Assessment Program," which investigates changes in the weather caused by various transport pollutants such as auto emissions and jet exhaust. It is now known, for instance, that jet exhaust changes the earth's temperature, and that urban air pollution changes the rainfall patterns over hundreds of square miles downwind. But in general the D.O.T. just takes measurements and builds models of the atmospheric fouling already with us, and seldom interferes with the weather deliberately.

A much more activist role is taken by the Department of the Interior, which was second with 47 projects. Most of these are cloud-seeding experiments con-

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE COOPER

ducted by Interior's Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec). The Bureau views its mission to be producing more water and more snow to "reclaim" the Great American Desert west of the Mississippi. Many of these efforts, such as developing techniques for relieving drought on mid-American farms, are clearly laudable.

Others are more dubious, such as their projects to cloud-seed huge Rocky Mountain snowstorms to increase the streamflow of the Colorado River. Who would benefit? Oil shale and coal developers west of the Rockies, utilities which would use the water to cool atomic reactors planned downriver, agribusiness irrigators in Southern California and Mexico—currently the victim of broken treaty obligations. The plot is tangled and full of unseen heavies, mirroring Polanski's *Chinatown* in subject matter and easily rivaling it for complexity. In the West, water is gold and the greatest single key to economic development. At one time or another, BuRec has seeded over practically every western state.

The Defense Department was third with 38 unclassified projects, most of which explore the use of cloud-seeding techniques to dissipate fog. Their classified operations are of course largely a mystery.

The first known use of weather warfare was a CIA effort in 1963 to quell with rainstorms Buddhist demonstrations in South Vietnamese cities. By 1965 the Pentagon had started experimenting and under Lyndon Johnson launched "Operation Rolling Thunder," a systematic program of secret weather warfare over Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Its main purpose was to "inhibit enemy logistical operations" by extending the monsoon season, in particular over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The program, continued under Richard Nixon, lasted seven years and cost $21.6 million. Because the program was considered "sensitive," military officials told Senate investigators, "reporting procedures were instituted to limit knowledge of the program."

Today, the Pentagon insists that it is no longer engaging in classified weather-modification projects. But it maintains an impressive weather-mod force at the China Lake Naval Weapons Center in California, where the Vietnam technology was developed. Informed speculation holds that the military now has the secret capability to cause storm intensifications, flooding, drought, hailstorms and tactical cloud cover and dispersal.

In an age when paranoia has turned inside out with reality, we might wonder whether the FBI, the CIA, the Pentagon and the White House got their heads together on weather mod during the political turmoil of the late '60s. Washington, D.C., like Vietnam, was then an arena of combat. Could those torrential rains that turned Resurrection City into a miserable sea of mud have been artificially stimulated or even made to order? And Woodstock . . . ?

Another powerful weather-modifying agency is the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA, as in Noah and the Ark). NOAA experiments with "hurricane abatement" in the East and supports research into the "management" of rainfall.

Also in on the act are the National Science Foundation, which specializes in hail-suppression projects in the West; the Atomic Energy Commission, which looks into subjects like the "Rainout of Radioactivity in Illinois"; NASA, which is interested in clearing fog; and the Department of Agriculture, which supports a project called "Skyfire" to develop methods for controlling lightning.

At the top, all this is at least nominally coordinated by the Interdepartmental Committee for Atmospheric Sciences, an adjunct of the Federal Council for Science and Technology, in turn an adjunct of the White House. The total outlay for the Committee's "National Atmospheric Sciences Program" in fiscal '74 came to $259 million. Since much of this pays for basic research and atmospheric monitoring that is vital backup to weather-mod projects, the actual amount of federal money involved in unclassified weather control is substantially greater than the $25 million reported.

The Rapid City deluge averaged four times the six-hour amounts to be expected once every one hundred years

Although most of the weather-mod action is federally inspired, there have been many active state and private operators too. From November 1, 1972, to September 30, 1973, a total of 2,732 "modification missions" were performed by private and local operators across the U.S. These projects involved a total of 40,692 "apparatus operation hours" of active weather changing. The "target areas" ranged from less than a square mile for airport fog projects to the 40,000 square miles of the Southern Utah Water Development Corporation's project. Sponsors of these operations are as various as local farm groups, agribusiness growers' associations, regional water districts, airlines and utility giants like Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison and Washington Water Power. The nation's most heavily modified states are South Dakota, Oklahoma and California, with most of the remaining activity spread around the Great Plains and the West. With downwind effects included, deliberate weather alterations in a given year have covered every inch of some states.

BILL KENDALL/BLACK STAR

Ice-9 in the Skies

In most weather-mod projects, whatever the goal, the technique used is some form of cloud seeding. The seeding chemical of choice is usually silver iodide (AgI), followed by dry ice crystals and polyelectrolytes like urea (ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer) and finely ground table salt (sodium chloride). In 1972-73, less than 5 percent of the "apparatus operation hours" were spent using aircraft as the mode of seeding delivery. The rest of the time ground generators were

Hugh Gardner, a sociologist and freelance journalist, is currently at work on The Children of Prosperity, *a book about communes in the early '70s.*

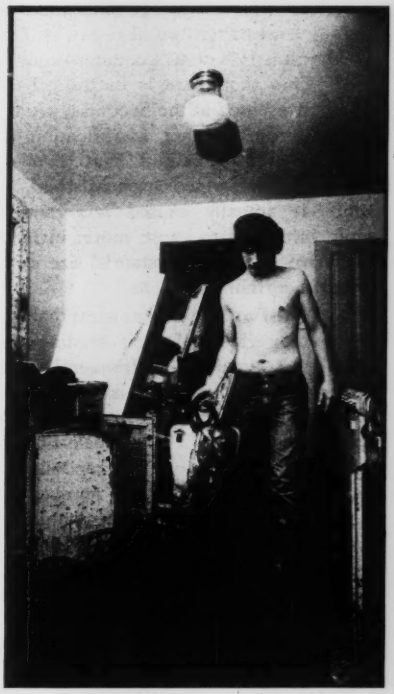
RICHARD KEHRWALD/BLACK STAR

BILL KENDALL/BLACK STAR

THE RAPID CITY FLOOD: After a day of cloud seeding outside Rapid City, torrential rains set off a catastrophic flood that ripped through the city, leaving more than 200 dead and more than $100 million in property damage. Now—three years later—a lawsuit seeks to pin the blame on government rain-making efforts.

used, which burn an AgI solution at selected remote sites and depend on natural updrafts for delivery.

AgI seeding was developed at the G.E. Lab in Schenectady shortly after World War II (the time and place of birth of Kurt Vonnegut's fictional "Ice-9"). Silver iodide is a highly insoluble crystalline salt with the unusual ability to cause the "nucleation" of super-cooled moisture, such as that of ordinary cumulus clouds, into fast-growing droplets. Under conditions that are not yet fully understood, these droplets, or, more accurately, snowflakes, increase rainfall both by growing and dropping out



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as water and by stimulating the dynamic processes of a cloud system.

But under certain other conditions, also not very well understood, *over*seeding will cause clouds to produce so many raindrops that they become too tiny to fall. In other words, cloud seeding is equally capable of *decreasing* rainfall. This process of overnucleation, when controlled, is used not only to stop rainfall at times deemed critical (for example, during a grain harvest), but it is also the basic principle involved in the many programs designed to suppress hail.

Aside from the military, the most aggressive promoter of weather modification within the federal government has been the Bureau of Reclamation. Over the years the Bureau has made many enticing claims for their weather-mod techniques that are worth examining in some detail. In every case, when we look

behind the PR to the evidence we find a picture of considerable confusion, if not downright contradiction.

Officials of the Bureau's "Project Skywater" claim that they can increase rainfall in the arid West by 10 to 30 percent—or even as much as 40 percent. But the statistics offered to prove this, given the broad variability in the natural weather, are not accepted as significant or conclusive by most atmospheric scientists. Cloud seeding causes important things to happen, they say, but nothing that can be predicted with scientific accuracy. "If it is true . . . that we cannot tell whether seeding is 10% or even 40% effective," says Dr. W. F. Hitschfeld of McGill University, "we also cannot tell whether it is 10% or 40% counter-productive!" This skepticism is buttressed by papers presented at the Second National Congress on Weather Modification in 1970, which indicated that Project Whitetop, performed over Missouri in 1960-64, actually caused *less* rainfall while intending to cause more; in fact, "negative effects of substantial size were found in certain conditions."

The Bureau further claims that the downwind effects of their seeding are usually minimal and "frequently are positive." This assertion is profoundly muddled by a 1972 study (performed for BuRec itself) called "Large Scale Effects of Cloud Seeding." Using randomized seeding procedures on a number of storms coming inland over the Santa Barbara coast, the experimenters found almost no change in the 30-mile "area of effect envelope" where they were actually seeding. On the other hand, downwind 50 to 100 miles were three areas of about 1,000 square miles each where the rainfall in seeded storms was 200 percent and even 300 percent higher than for unseeded storms. In the same general downwind regions, the seeded storms also *persisted* from two to six times as long as unseeded storms. These effects are clearly not minimal, and just how desirable and positive are storms that are three times as intense and six times as long as normal? Furthermore, other *even larger* areas downwind as far as 150 miles got only *half* as much rainfall when the storms were seeded. The techniques of weather control, it seems, are not always under control. Along the same lines, Dr. Charles Moore of New Mexico Tech argues that silver iodide seeding can have very widespread effects, and that in the arid Southwest particularly, these likely include the reduction of summer rainfall over large areas.

Another Bureau claim is that "environmental impacts have been found to be minor or transitory." Most of the research that backs this up has been done on AgI, free silver and free iodide, and it is true that, *so far,* no threatening impacts have been found (although AgI transformation into more corrosive substances such as silver nitrate is still being investigated). But while the amounts of AgI used in seeding today are very tiny and no cause for alarm, intelligent paranoiacs will remember that it took 50 years for mercury to show up as the danger it is today. And on the whole, to quote W.J.D. Kennedy, director of the Rocky Mountain Center on the Environment (and formerly associated with the National Center for Atmospheric Research, which conducts weather-mod research itself), "only a few weather modification projects investigate any subject other than physical problems . . . generally, however, no attention whatever is paid to the social, ecological, and economic implications of the physical research." Of the total $25 million spent by the federal government on weather-mod programs in fiscal '73, only 4 percent was allocated to "social, economic, legal and ecological studies" combined.

Project Whitetop, performed over Missouri in the early '60s, actually caused less rain while intending to cause more

The Bureau insists that cloud-seeding "benefit-cost ratios exceed 10:1." While cloud seeding *is* comparatively cheap, there is far more to the benefit-cost picture than just the extra rainfall produced, if in fact it is produced. As we have seen, downwind areas might receive *less* rainfall, too *much* rainfall or rainfall at the wrong time. Early wheat crops can be blighted by too much moisture, for instance, and grain crops can likewise be damaged by rain at harvest time. Agricultural economists add that farmer dependence on cloud seeding may encourage them to expand their crops into marginal areas, or shift from grain to soybeans; either move would make them more vulnerable to future droughts when there were no clouds to seed. The non-farming population is affected too, of course; not all of us want more or less rain just because it suits the convenience of farmers. And there is some evidence that the weather-mod money spent to improve agriculture might improve it more if invested in dryland cropping and range management techniques instead.

Similar criticisms apply to the Bureau's "Winter Orographic Snowpack Augmentation" program, a large-scale snow-seeding effort now moving into operation in the Upper Colorado River Basin, which covers a four-state area. This will mean extra avalanche, snow-removal and cattle-feeding burdens for thousands of local residents, and potentially serious changes in timberline forage for wild animals. For its part, the Bureau maintains that the additional snowpack will produce 2.3 million acre-feet of extra snowmelt water in this naturally arid basin, worth at least $3.3 million annually. Recently, however, the Stanford Research Institute reported that the cost of operating the program with appropriate environmental controls will exceed $9 million annually. The beneficiaries (besides skiers) will be downriver irrigators, oil shale, coal and atomic reactor developers, and the city of Los Angeles (ah, *Chinatown* . . .), which stands to gain $6.2 million worth of new hydroelectricity from Hoover Dam. And the Bureau gains, too, with new turf and power.

The net economic effect of the Colorado snowpack project will be to shift taxpayer money from the public treasury to the pockets of the energy corporations, which are deeply involved in both mineral development and irrigated corporate agriculture in the Colorado Basin. The city of Los Angeles will receive cleaner electricity at the expense of new hazards and costs for the people and wildlife of the Rockies. And much of the "extra" water made available for energy development will be diverted to fossil fuel mines and nuclear reactors rather than used to develop alternatives like solar electrification, for which the area is well-suited. In short, a vast array of hidden costs, resource giveaways and alternative approaches to benefit are left out of the Bureau's calculations.

The Bureau of Reclamation, we should note, is not alone in being overzealous. There have been serious discussions at NOAA, for instance, about using nuclear explosions in its anti-hurricane campaign. But the Bureau takes the cake for the grandiosity of its ambition: a national program of "precipitation management," or at minimum such a program for the West, its traditional jurisdiction. Project Skywater alone, according to a booklet introducing the Bureau promo movie called *Rivers in the Sky,* was "originally recognized in the mid-

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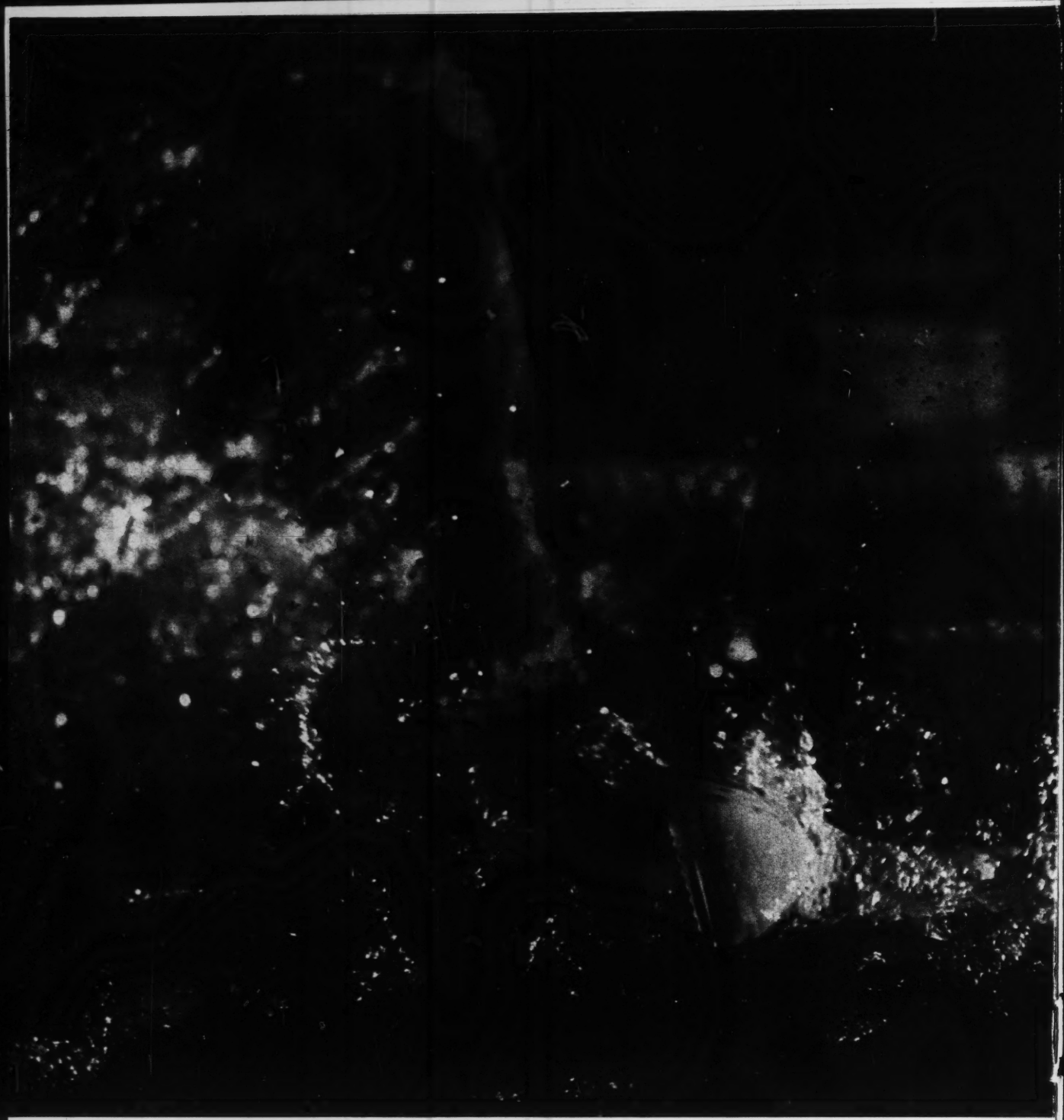

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1960s as at least an $800 million task over a period of 20 years." (Funding thus far has been $42 million.)

Finally, the Bureau claims that "techniques have advanced to a level and a certainty for limited or emergency use." A more accurate way of stating this is that "techniques have advanced to a useful level in limited or emergency uses *only* if the proper rain-bearing clouds are present and *never* for a certainty." The only "certain" use of seeding techniques, scientists say, is the dissipation of cold fog at airports.

The efficiency of cloud seeding, then, is more a political question than a technical one. When private weather modifiers seek contracts or government agencies seek congressional appropriations, the technology is proven or very nearly so, and significant and favorable outcomes are promised. If the weather changers can't deliver, on the other hand, they can retreat to the "lack of sufficient statistics" and make the familiar call for "more research," to be conducted of course by themselves.

The problem is a threefold picture of government inadequacy; weather modification is not properly monitored, it is not properly evaluated and it is not properly regulated. Where the weather is concerned the public interest is exactly what the bureaucrats, agency scientists and private operators say it is. No one is in charge of the weather except for governmental and private promoters with a special interest in changing it.

Battling the Beer Barons

In the dryland states now most affected by weather control, these activities have split many communities down the middle. In the Littlefield-Plainview area of Texas, in Hungry Horse, Montana, in the towns of Mt. Vernon and Woodland in Washington and elsewhere, fierce arguments and legal battles continue today between those opposed and those in favor—even though the projects there are supposed to result in many local benefits. A recent study of 326 plains farmers by sociologist Barbara Farhar found that while a majority favored cloud seeding if its helps farmers, 38 percent agreed with the statement that "cloud seeding probably violates God's plans for man and the weather." Another study by sociologist Eugene Haas found that 58 percent of those interviewed felt that "local residents" *should* make decisions regarding local cloud-seeding projects, but that only 16 percent believed "local residents" *will* make the decisions. In Farhar's study only 2 percent trusted control over such

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projects to the federal government or the "scientists conducting the program."

"If the people don't want weather modification," says Colorado rancher John Shawcroft, "you shouldn't try to force it on them, no matter how good it is." But Colorado has seen such attempts. In 1972 it was the scene for the most tempestuous popular uprising against weather changers to date. The revolt included rifle fire on cloud-seeding aircraft and the dynamiting of a weather-mod radar station.

The incident took place in Colorado's mammoth San Luis Valley, where the economy is mostly pinned on cattle grazing and potato farming. Those sponsoring the weather control were the Coors Beer Company and their contract growers of Moravian barley for malting. They were interested in more rain at some points, less at harvest, and in suppressing hail—all on their terms, seemingly without regard to the consequences for the Valley in general. Most Valley farmers were convinced that they were being robbed of precious moisture; in a straw vote conducted along with the November elections, they voted over 3 to 1 against the beer barons. Coors, for its part, threatened to cut off all barley purchases from the Valley if their program was stopped. It *was* stopped but only after the violence and a series of tumultuous hearings before the state Department of Natural Resources.

The Rapid City Disaster

Hearings came too late to help the people of Rapid City, South Dakota. On June 9, 1972, the Bureau of Reclamation's "Project Cloud Catcher" was at work seeding clouds near the city, through its Rapid City contractor, The Institute for Atmospheric Studies. By the end of the day, an incredible deluge which the NOAA later said "averaged about *four times* the six-hour amounts that are expected *once every 100 years* in that area" had created a flash flood that killed over 200 people and wrought damages of more than $100 million.

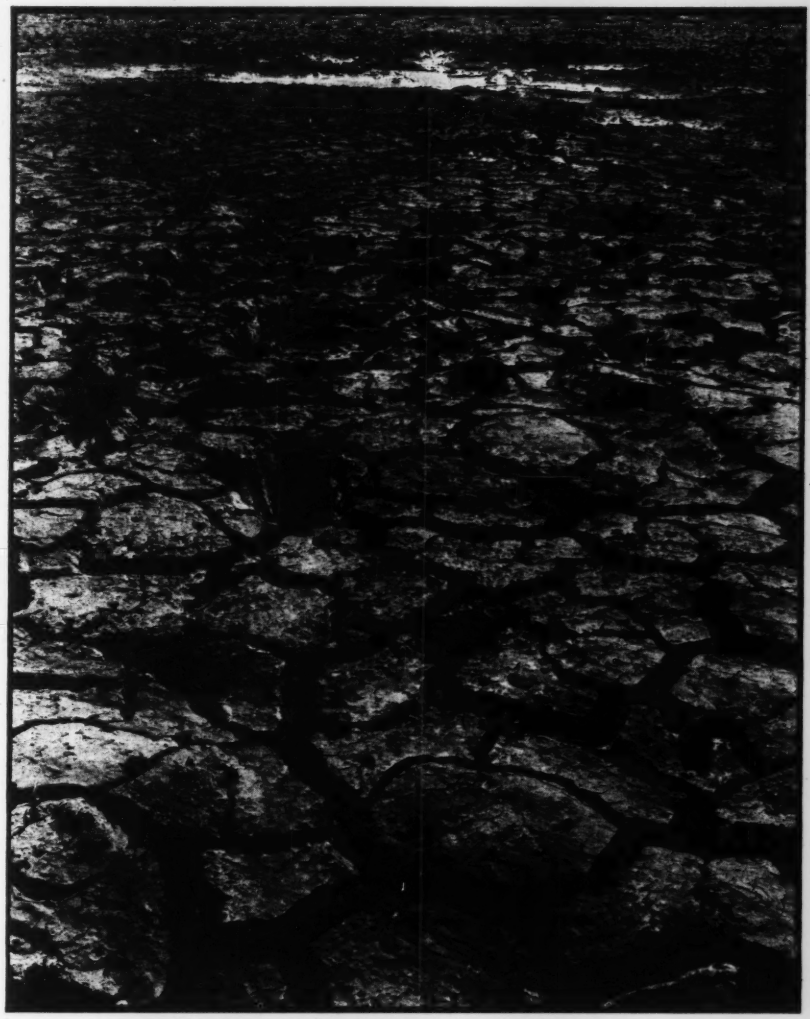
In the mid-afternoon of June 9, clouds were seeded a few miles northwest of Rapid City directly adjacent to and upwind of the area which was to have the highest rainfall total (15 inches). Later that afternoon, despite the ominous buildup of storm clouds to the west—which should have stopped the project—five more seeding exercises were run south of the city, in the face of a 30-mph southeasterly wind. The wind blew the seeded clouds directly into the main storm mass which lay stationary to the

west, and the region where they met (a few miles southwest of Rapid City) was the location of the storm's second most torrential rainfall.

When reporters heard rumors of this seeding and flocked in for an explanation, they were assured by IAS Director Richard Schleusener that "the cloud seeding did not contribute to this disaster." They were told that the first seeding was to the north rather than the northwest, and that both the "north" and south seedings were well away from the storm coming in from the west. They were misled about the nature of the prevailing winds in the seeded areas, which blew the seeded clouds into the storm. They were given the impression that there was a *single* storm center off to the west, rather than *two* storm centers corresponding to the seeding sites. The experts said so, and the reporters went home without a story.

The true facts were made known three weeks later by an official Board of Inquiry, appointed at the request of South Dakota Governor Kneip. But with much soothing logic and technical expertise, the Board came to the shockingly improbable conclusion that the seeding efforts contributed at *most* "only one billionth of the recorded rainfall." In general, the disaster was treated as just another flood of the sort that happens to Rapid City "about once every nine or ten years," despite U.S. Geological Survey calculations that the flood's peak flow was *"more than 10 times* the flow of any previous flood on record." The Board made every effort to show how insignificant and inefficient the seeding was, despite the NOAA disaster report stating that the rainfall outside Rapid City was astonishingly heavy: four times the heaviest downpour to be expected once a century.

Coors threatened to cut off all barley purchases from the Valley unless their rain-making program were accepted



IVAN MASSAR/BLACK STAR

Will cloud seeding just scramble rainfall patterns and leave once green areas parched?

Thus the official Board of Inquiry released the raw facts (or rather some of them—and they were by then available from various government agencies anyway) and then proceeded to minimize them at every turn and obscure their meaning. Perhaps a look at the three men making up the Board explains why. The Board was chaired by Dr. Pierre St. Armand, a vocal exponent of weather-mod who works at the Naval Weapons Center in China Lake, where the cloud-seeding technology used in Vietnam was developed. Another member was Robert Elliott, a commercial cloud-seeder and President of North American Weather Consultants in Santa Barbara, California; Elliott and his company had performed several research projects for the Bureau of Reclamation. The third and final member was Ray Jay Davis, Arizona law professor, author of *The Legal Implications of Atmospheric Water Resources Development and Management* (on contract for the Bureau of Reclamation) and weather mod's foremost legal expert. Among the many weather modifiers Davis had successfully defended in the past was none other than rainmaker Robert Elliott.

Whatever the facts of the matter, this was not exactly a disinterested set of Inquirers. Their final report absolved the rainmaking efforts of any possible blame: "Had none been conducted," the report concluded, "the damage would have been the same." At the same time, the Board made several recommendations for "improved procedures" that clearly indicated the ineptitude of the BuRec-IAS cloud-seeders. If this seems contradictory, we need only look at Professor Davis' book, where he points out in exhaustive detail why cloud-seeders are not now held responsible by the courts for contributing to injury. The seeders' negligence, inappropriate procedures or undue risk-taking are not taken into account so long as the court can find that damage would have occurred anyway. And the normal variability in the weather makes it prac-

tically impossible to rebut the seeders' claim that the damage was caused by nature. "To our knowledge," write sociologists Barbara Farhar and Julia Mewes, "no one has ever collected damages from weather modifiers as a result of claims resulting from weather effects." But some South Dakotans are going to try. Relatives of four of those killed in the Rapid City tragedy brought suit against the Department of the Interior on June 3, seeking $1.7 million for loss of life and property damage. The plaintiffs hope to expand the suit into a class action in order to assert the claims of all the flood's victims.

Ironically enough, the same date that the *Report on Rapid City Flood of 9 June 1972* was publicly issued—July 5, 1972—marked the last seeding run over Vietnam with the weather-war devices developed at St. Armand's Naval Weapons Center. Weather modification was no longer a threat to the people of Indochina, but at home its mandarins were still operating unchecked.

Who Will Control Our Skies?

The status of public control over weather mod approaches the complete absence of regulation. Almost half of our states have no weather-modification laws at all. Most of the rest have little more than statutes authorizing weather-mod research. In 1975—after a flurry of new laws passed in the past year or two—only 21 states require weather modifiers to be licensed, only 16 require operator financial responsibility, only 11 require operational permits and only 5 have regulatory weather-modification boards or require environmental impact statements. Of the 50 states, only three have "proper permissive-control laws" considered comprehensive by professional and legal experts: Texas, Illinois and Colorado. "But neither Colorado nor any other state," says Senator Floyd Haskell, "can now determine where weather modification activities are taking place or the effect they are having—even within states." New York has no laws at all; California's are considered poor (neither permits, proof of financial responsibility, public hearings nor impact statements are required). The few state weather control commissions are notably in favor of weather mod, and the Coors case appears to be the only instance where an unhappy public stopped a weather-mod project administratively.

At the federal level, the only legal requirement affecting the weather changers—and this became effective only in November 1972—is NOAA. "These rules," NOAA hastens to point out, "are concerned only with the reporting of weather modification projects and not their regulation, control, or technical evaluation. . . ." Even this skimpy level of scrutiny, however, did not take effect for federally funded projects—the vast majority—until this year. In essence, each government agency involved is left even today to promote and execute weather modification as it sees fit, subject only to a kind of jurisdictional division of labor. Over the years, legislative attempts to control or regulate these activities have consistently languished on the shelf.

Rep. Frank Evans of Colorado introduced a tough bill in the last session of Congress to require federal permits, cash bonds, close monitoring and submission of daily operator logs. A similar bill was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Haskell. Neither bill moved out of committee and neither bill has been re-introduced in the current session. The staff chiefs of the two most relevant Senate and House committees, incidentally, are both former BuRec employees of over ten years standing.

A recent poll of plains farmers indicated that 38 percent believe cloud seeding "violates God's plans for man and the weather"

Sen. Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island has been trying for years to get a Senate resolution outlawing weather mod in warfare. On this front, at least, hearings are continuing. Interestingly, the Weather Modification Association, which opposes all these bills, sent a resolution of its own to Senator Pell in September '73, taking the position that weather mod was more "humane" than conventional warfare.

Ater years of agency infighting in the executive branch, Interior's BuRec and Commerce's NOAA are now deadlocked at the top of the heap for the dubious but ultimate weather-mod plum: control over the emerging national atmospheric development. A strange but ingenious coalition has firmed up behind its growth. On center stage we find family farmers of the dry prairie states who really would benefit by more rain and less hail (other things remaining equal). But backstage we find agribusiness irrigators and energy giants, linked together through oil companies, who are in no other ways the family farmer's friends. In the wings, as always, are the entrenched government agencies with their missions of mercy, who in turn curry favor with jingoistic congressmen arguing that we have to develop weather warfare to protect the peace. Sitting in the audience with baited breath are representatives of the construction industry, which could save billions if the weather was more often favorable for building, and the insurance industry, which estimates that comprehensive weather mod could save it $186 million annually.

Most of the action in this drama, so far, has been played out in Washington, D.C., and in the states west of the Mississippi. But the chips at stake are spread throughout the U.S., wherever there are clouds. In one subplot, for instance, the Travelers Research Corporation, a subsidiary of Travelers Insurance of Connecticut, recently performed a study for BuRec called "Water From The Sky." The result is a slick, undated promo booklet advocating a "managed atmospheric water resource in the Connecticut River Basin," affecting virtually all of New England and lapping into Maine and New York. The booklet recommends in addition that we should "investigate the potential value of the atmospheric water resource in other river basins of the Northeastern United States."

Gone, then, are the days when "rainmaking" was a snake-oil show for gullible farmers operated out of a pickup truck. Today it is a scientific, commercial, political and military establishment of considerable substance and authority. Although everyone's interested in "better weather," "drought relief" and "preventing disasters," nobody much likes unregulated weather tampering, and the thunderhead on the horizon which most of us would probably not like to see is a program of national weather management. There is a strong feeling in some quarters that once weather-mod projects are interacting with the natural weather and with each other, there will be little choice but to institute comprehensive weather control—not just modification—throughout the nation.

Another storm is brewing in the U.N., whose continuing disarmament talks included last year, for the first time, the issue of weather warfare. The issue was unilaterally added to the agenda by Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko. According to the newspaper of the U.N. Association, "the U.S. is believed to have a technical lead in the military use of

cloud-seeding . . . and Moscow may calculate that its enthusiasm for prohibiting such methods is not fully shared in Washington." Disarmament negotiators are especially concerned that weather warfare will hurt civilian populations more than military forces, and that the low cost of weather-mod capability may mean its rapid spread and use by small countries as well as large.

The stakes are stepped up even further by the crisis in our world's food supply, which is now down to a month's reserves, the lowest in decades. Climatologists now seem agreed that the earth is moving into a period of cooling and more radical weather fluctuations like droughts, floods and other agricultural disasters. In a world already plagued with inflation, overpopulation and energy shortages, the competition for food—and the rainfall it takes to grow it—may become intense. Some nations may have to modify the weather to survive, if for no other reason than the fact that their neighbors are doing it. Someday soon, control over the weather may become yet another worldwide commodity and weapons struggle. At present, the atmosphere and all the life-giving water it contains is the most wide-open resource frontier still up for grabs.

Whether weather mod is considered an angel of mercy to a hungry world or "ecological murder," as some critics put it, there is little question that it will be used ever more widely around the world in the years ahead, Russia, China, Israel and Canada have been into it for years, and the smaller, poorer countries are now following with programs of their own. For better or worse, the U.S. is leading the way. If our efforts turn out to have negative effects on the weather of other countries, or are even perceived as such, we will be accused of yet another sort of imperialism: ripping off the world's weather.

It is inevitable and probably desirable that research and limited weather-mod operations continue on behalf of the dryland farmers who want it, or the hurricane victims who want it, and so on—although the public might well wonder why they are not consulted or given some role in deciding, why there are so few permits sought or impact statements filed, and why the federal government continues to walk in its sleep. There would seem to be a certain logic in placing a moratorium on all weather-mod operations and all but limited research and emergency projects until some sort of public regulatory function is achieved. But if the public wants it that way, it will first have to take control of the weather controllers. ●

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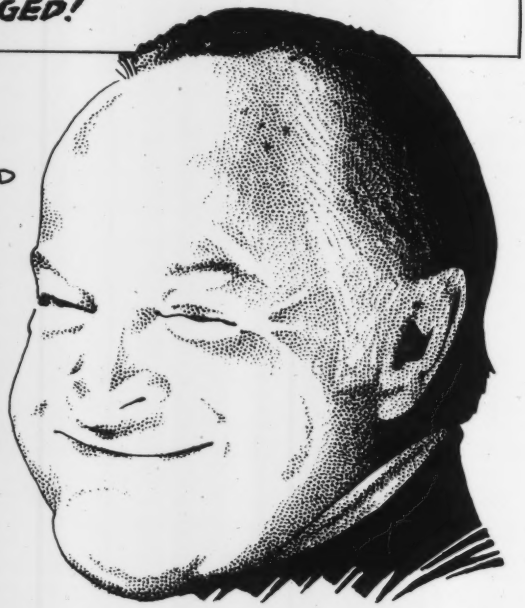

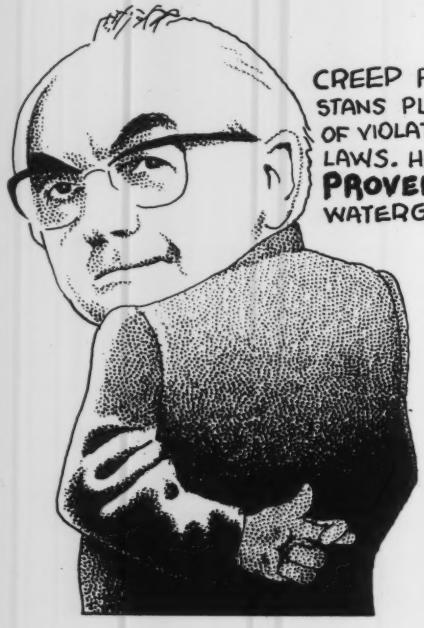

CREEP FINANCE DIRECTOR MAURICE STANS PLED GUILTY TO 5 CHARGES OF VIOLATING ELECTION FUND-RAISING LAWS. HE CLAIMED THAT THIS PLEA **PROVED HIS INNOCENCE** IN THE WATERGATE SCANDAL!

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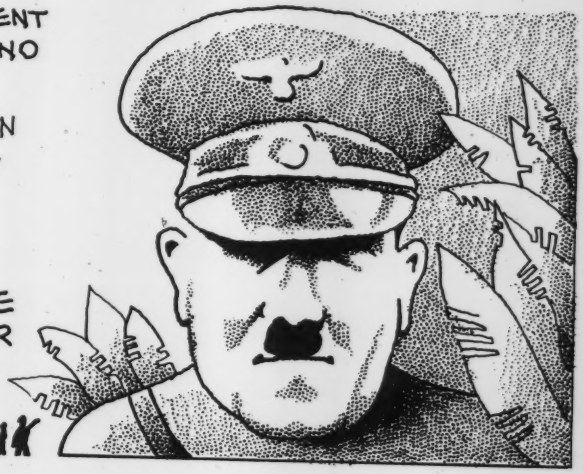
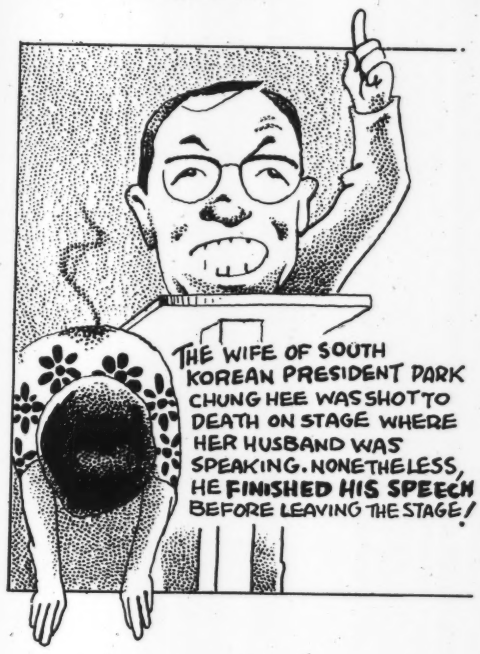
FORMER INDIANA REPRESENTATIVE EARL LANDGREBE ONCE VOTED "NO" **ON A QUORUM CALL!**

FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MELVIN LAIRD HAS A HEAD **SHAPED LIKE A BULLET!**

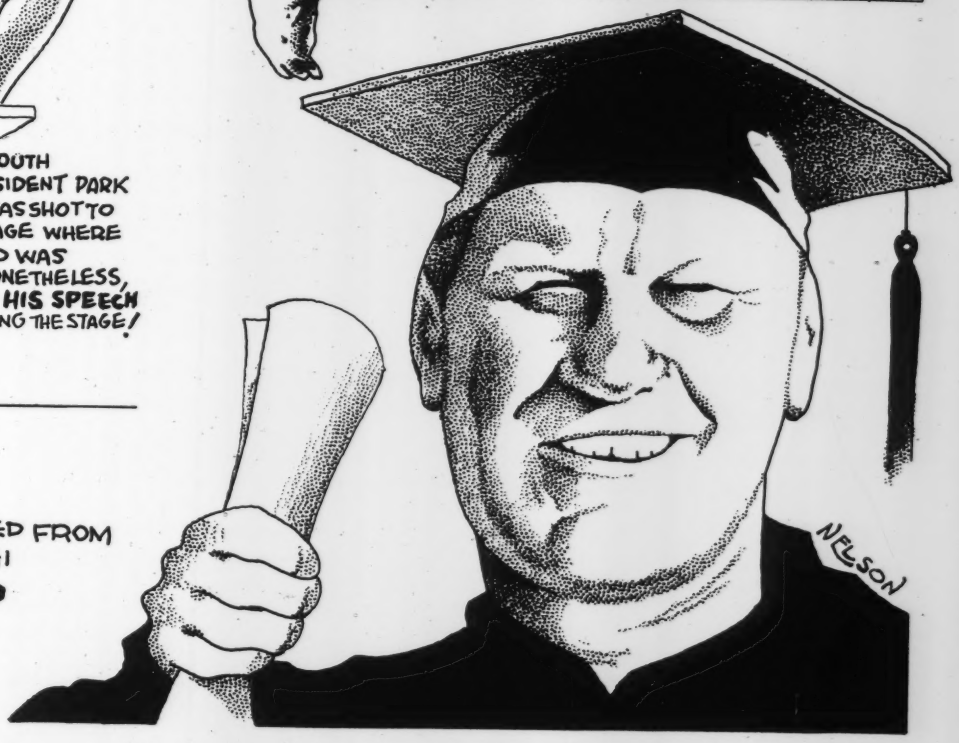
UGANDA'S PRESIDENT IDI AMIN FOUND NO MONUMENTS TO ADOLF HITLER WHEN HE VISITED WEST GERMANY. TO CORRECT THIS SLIGHT, AMIN IS ERECTING A STATUE OF THE NAZI LEADER **IN THE HEART OF AFRICA!**



EUGENE A. CERNAN AND HARRISON H. SCHMITT HOLD THE WORLD RECORD FOR TIME SPENT ON THE SURFACE OF THE MOON - 75 HOURS — YET OUTSIDE OF THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILIES, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND ANYONE ***WHO HAS EVER HEARD OF THEM!***



THE WIFE OF SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG HEE WAS SHOT TO DEATH ON STAGE WHERE HER HUSBAND WAS SPEAKING. NONETHELESS, HE **FINISHED HIS SPEECH** BEFORE LEAVING THE STAGE!



GERALD FORD GRADUATED FROM YALE LAW SCHOOL IN 1941 **IN THE TOP THIRD OF HIS CLASS!!**

Strange, seemingly fortuitous events–coincidences–may be letters in fate's alphabet, clues to an ultimate intent

COINCIDENCE

By John Stickney

Look for them at the bottom of the newspaper page, the squibs that chronicle the day's odd, absurd or droll affairs. In ironic review of the headlined march of important events above, these stragglers tag along at the end of columns, and many tell of coincidences:

"Vera Czermak jumped out of her third-story window when she learned her husband had betrayed her," reads a UPI dispatch. "Mrs. Czermak is recovering in the hospital after landing on her husband, who was killed, the newspaper *Bercerny Pravda* reported yesterday."

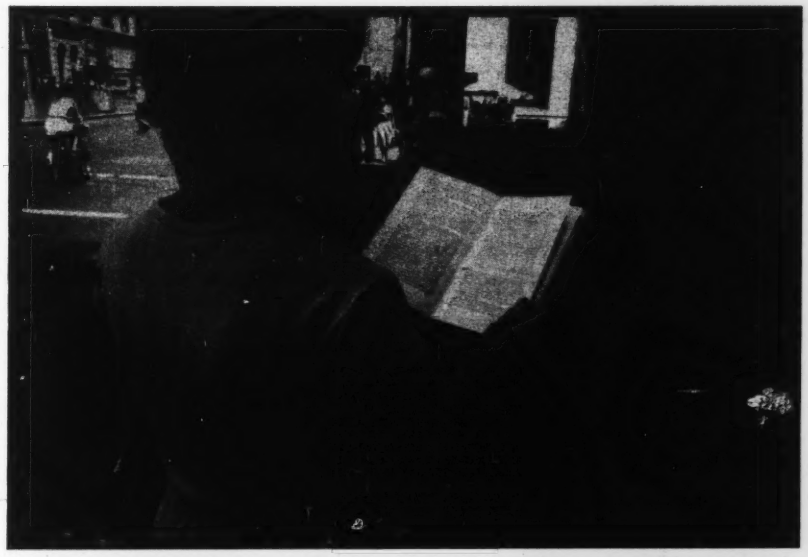
The improbability of this collision—the special providence in the fall of a sparrow or a heartsick Mrs. Czermak—rouses pained laughter, but finally the joke is on us. Quirks agitate every life: friends share a thought and voice it at the same moment, meet by accident in unlikely places, or mention a name and see the very person turn the corner. "It's a small world," says folk wisdom. "Speak of the devil and his horns appear." A number, a word, a phrase repeats in series; runs of good luck or bad prevail; a problem casts its reminders everywhere. Happenstance shows us that under fate's spotlight we are clowns taking pratfalls on cue from a whimsical ringmaster.

Coincidences sometimes accompany the headlines. A scholar charts the weird symmetry of two assassinations: Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy, elected in 1860 and 1960, respectively, died on a Friday in the presence of their wives; each was warned to avoid the death place, the one by his secretary Kennedy, the other by his secretary Lincoln; both were succeeded by Southern Democrat ex-senators named Johnson, born in 1808 and 1908, respectively.

Enough quirks gathered around the Patty Hearst kidnapping to prompt FBI agents to study *Black Abductors,* a smut novel published in 1972. Author "Harrison James" presents a guerrilla band snatching a young heiress—Patricia by name—from the arms of her boyfriend; she romanticizes and romances her captors, then demands ransom from her father, a wealthy right-winger from California. This chain of coincidences is strong, but another link was forged: last January Milton Caniff sketched a *Steve Canyon* comic strip about an abducted heiress who also joins the rebel thieves. Caniff dropped the fictional kidnapping in the aftermath of the real one; he is a friend of the Hearsts.

Here fiction presaged fact, although the analogies between the two look less startling in light of the times that spawned them: such commonplaces as racial strife, abduction and revolt are quite likely to generate new plots, both real and fanciful. History blends symbiotically with myths of rebellion. A fund of sensational notions was shared by the cartoonist, the pornographer, the terrorists and—as the scenario evolved—the heiress herself; that their thoughts should dovetail is almost predictable.

Other coincidences baffle analysis. Connoisseurs of chance record them, hoping that reason will someday visit their trove of potential entries in Ripley's Believe It or Not. A favorite among collectors is the Golden Matchbox Saga, which one mystery buff calls the Nonpareil; it appears in *My Remembrances* by Edward H. Sothern, a matinee idol of the Gay Nineties. A family of actors—Soth-



ern, his brother Sam and their father Edward A.—play roles in this drama.

An avid fox hunter, Sothern Sr. received the golden matchbox as a gift from his riding companion the Prince of Wales, later to become Edward VII. During a hunt Sothern fell from his horse, then noticed that the matchbox had broken off his watch chain; unable to find it, he ordered a duplicate. Years afterward he gave the copy to his son Sam, who was about to embark on a theatrical tour of Australia, and Sam in turn presented the matchbox to an Australian named Labertouche.

Upon his return to England, Sam—who inherited his father's passion for the chase—rode to hounds beside an elderly gentleman farmer; they introduced themselves, and the landowner asked if Sam was Edward A. Sothern's son. That morning a farmhand had plowed up the original golden matchbox, buried for 20 years on the country squire's property. Astonished, Sam wrote a letter about the coincidence to his brother Edward, on tour in America.

Edward read the letter while seated in a train compartment with Arthur Lawrence, an actor he had met for the first time earlier that day. Sothern told his companion the strange history, then wondered out loud whatever became of the duplicate; at that point Lawrence reached for his watch chain, ornamented with a present given him on an Australian tour by a Mr. Labertouche—the second golden matchbox.

Rarely do so many threads gather, spun across two generations and three continents, woven on a supernatural loom into a tapestry whose hieroglyphs nobody can decipher. But everybody chances upon swatches of the fabric:

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUANE MICHAELS

abrupt juxtapositions that mystify, comfort or shock because they seem embroidered with meaning. "An accident is when a thing happens," Gertrude Stein defines. "A coincidence is when something is going to happen and does." Random events combine and, like a pun or a metaphor, suggest more than the sum of their terms; these freaks of nature at times resemble practical jokes, but may appear as revelations.

Seeking a laugh or an epiphany, writers as diverse as Dickens, Tolstoy, Vonnegut, O. Henry and Thornton Wilder cultivate coincidences. James Joyce's novels in particular are constellations of analogy, resonance and atonement whirling around a central order; his hero Stephen Dedalus ponders what he calls "the ineluctable modality of the visible." The most deliberate of craftsmen, Joyce nevertheless appreciated the value of chance in his life and work, as biographer Richard Ellman notes:

One day Joyce was dictating passages from *Finnegans Wake* to his friend Samuel Beckett when somebody knocked at the door. Beckett did not hear the noise, but he transcribed Joyce's "Come in!" Later he read the dictation to Joyce, who asked, "What's that 'Come in!'?" Beckett assured him he had spoken the phrase. Joyce considered for a moment and said, "Let it stand!"

In our time the master of coincidence is Thomas Pynchon, whose characters wander through his novels like planchettes on Ouija boards. While Joyce's universe is ultimately benign, Pynchon's is at best indifferent, and paranoia blooms everywhere in the soil of his fantasy landscapes. "Events seem to be ordered into an ominous logic," fears Herbert Stencil, rebounding from a spate of star-crossed episodes in *V.*

The Prime Mover in Pynchon's cosmology keeps sending discrete signals to his characters. "V.'s is a country of coincidence, ruled by a ministry of myth," Stencil remarks. "Whose emissaries haunt this century's streets." These signals are elusive, but in sequence they point to a meaning lost or neglected in history, perhaps beyond recovery. "Each clue that comes is supposed to have its own clarity, its fine chance for permanence," Pynchon says of Oedipa Maas' dilemma in *The Crying of Lot 49.* "But then she wondered if the gemlike 'clues' were only some kind of compensation. To make up for her having lost the direct epileptic Word, the cry that might abolish the night."

And the Word, as the gospel of St. John tells us, is God. His messages, once labeled Providences, linger just past the threshold of our understanding. Anxious to learn of destiny, to intuit the structure that overarches the everyday, we wait for spontaneous hints and signs drawn from a phantasmagorical lexicon. Although the text is obscure, one thing is clear: coincidences are letters in fate's alphabet. Gathered and studied, they may reveal the drift if not the definition of an ultimate intent.

"The highway is for gamblers, better use your sense," Bob Dylan advises Baby Blue. "Take what you have gathered from coincidence." The lyric implies a universal order apparent to us in haphazard clues, if only we can follow them. Pathfinders are legion these days; they flip Tarot cards, consult the *I Ching,* reckon karma, check vibes, draw up star charts and go through changes. The seers and fortune-tellers revive ancient intuitive practices, but during the last five decades an array of physicists, artists and psychologists have also explored the occult, seeking the dynamics of fate. Their discoveries, as we shall see, challenge our customary notions of what is real and what is not, and they suggest that truths about the nature of existence lie somewhere between the astrologer's chart and the scientist's laboratory.

Coincidence is actually the handiwork of a Scot named McFate, according to my friend Nicola Lane, a painter; she drew his portrait for me. Wearing a kilt, a tam-o'-shanter and a tartan cloak that lets him vanish, the bewhiskered rogue trifles with circumstances for his own perverse amusement. Whenever things are in a muddle and she is at wit's end, Nicola will conjure up the trickster by crying, "Lead on, McFate!" Daughter of a British consul, she has traveled widely and watched the Scot do mischief everywhere.

One day when she was eight years old, playing hide-and-seek with schoolmates in London's Holland Park, Nicola hid behind a holly bush. By surprise she found eight shillings and sixpence buried in the loose soil there, and she carried the loot—it seemed a treasure—to the teacher and asked if she might keep it. The teacher referred her for advice to a park attendant, who simply declared, "Finders keepers!"

Nearly 13 years later, Nicola strolled through Holland Park with her boyfriend; he pointed to a holly bush and said, "I stashed eight shillings and sixpence under that bush when I was a kid, but somebody came along and dug them up." Amazed, Nicola confessed she was that very somebody. As a child her companion had stolen the money from his mother and, afraid he'd be caught red-handed, buried the coins in the park.

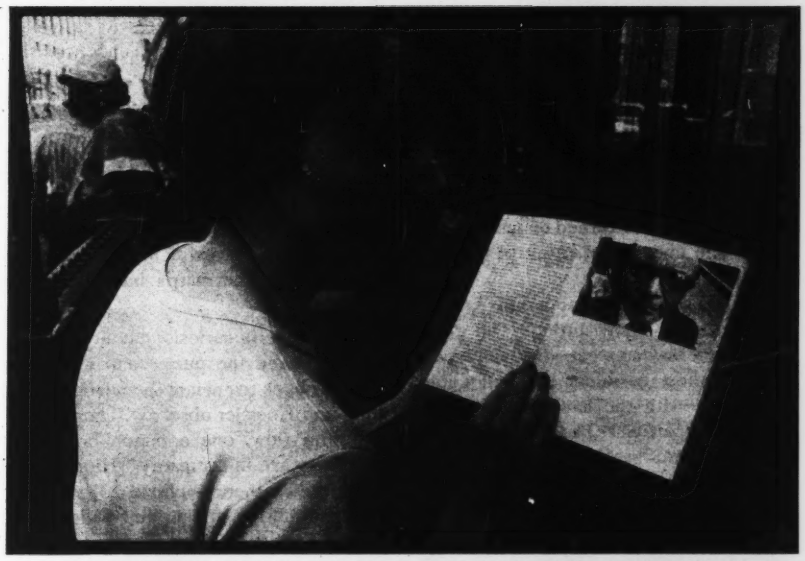
Whether McFate plotted the coincidence or not, Nicola and her friend joked about it as both proof and a prophesy: theft punished, romance foretold. Their exchange of shillings and pence recalls the *I Ching,* where falling coins evoke an oracle: a toss completes one of 64 possible hexagrams, each with a traditional significance. Cast at random, the coins reflect the character of the moment, itself a chance creation of a higher order to which the sacred text alludes. Moments carry the pattern of eternity, the *I Ching* supposes; they leave strong traces, as any vintner or astrologer will attest. "It always seemed natural to me that mind and matter influence one another," Nicola says. "We touched the coins and they brought us together like a magnet."

The holly bush rendezvous and *I Ching* divination are effects without known causes, and the mysterious force that produces them calls up analogies with magnetism or gravity—familiar ghosts. In this century speculation about the machinery of coincidence begins with Paul Kammerer, an Austrian biologist who twice disputed scientific orthodoxy and twice suffered for his presumption; Arthur Koestler tells of the maverick's life and work in *The Case of the Midwife Toad.* First, Kammerer differed with his colleagues over the methods of genetic inheritance. Second, he challenged the primacy of a classic law of physics—the principle of causality, which defines the lockstep succession of cause and effect.

Coincidences do not always adhere to that principle, Kammerer argued. From age 20 to 40 he compiled them, filling a logbook; for instance, on two successive evenings his brother-in-law received theater seat and cloakroom tickets with the same numbers. Kammerer painstakingly graded and systematized the myriad examples, trying to quantify their fateful quality, and from his mathematical tables jumped cycles and series that broke the laws of probability yet fell together in their own transcendent patterns. Certain random events, he surmised, are not fractures in the great chain of cause and effect; rather, they respond to the tug of another order entirely.

Kammerer named this order "seriality." Sharing the universe with causality, the principle unites related objects across space and time; coincidences are signs of its work. The visionary biologist summarized his theory in *Das Gesetz der*

John Stickney is a free lance who lives in New York.



Serie, or *The Law of the Series,* published in 1919: "We thus arrive at the image of a world-mosaic or cosmic kaleidoscope, which, in spite of constant shufflings and rearrangements, also takes care of bringing like and like together." Through a kaleidoscope whose mechanism he could not explain, Kammerer glimpsed a design of fate.

Peering into the kaleidoscope also fascinated C. G. Jung, who kept his own journal of coincidences. One example he culled from French astronomer Camille Flammarion's *The Unknown:*

As a boy in Orleans, a M. Deschamps received his first taste of plum pudding from a M. de Fortgibu. The dessert left its memory, and when Deschamps came across plum pudding a decade later in a Paris restaurant, he ordered some—only to discover that de Fortgibu had eaten the last portion at a nearby table. Years afterward Deschamps was served plum pudding at a dinner party, and he amused the guests with the story of his star-crossed affair with the delicacy. Just as he joked that de Fortgibu should appear for symmetry's sake, the door opened; the same man crossed the threshold. Elderly and befuddled, he had obtained a wrong address and blundered upon the party by mistake.

While Kammerer hypothesized an undetected physical cause for such phenomena, Jung believed a psychic force engineered them. Like joins like in conformity to a universal "meaning" latent within the unconscious mind, a labyrinth where cause and effect lose their way, where space and time disappear in shadow. Coincidences are surface expressions of this extraphysical "meaning" or order, and they come up from underground in answer to its signal. Jung replaced Kammerer's term for the process in *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle,* in which he drew examples from his psychiatric practice:

One day a young woman at a crucial stage of therapy told the doctor about a dream in which she was given a golden scarab. While she spoke, Jung heard a tapping noise at the window. He turned and saw that an insect was outside flying against the pane as if to enter the dark room. Opening the window, Jung grabbed the bug; it was a scarabaeid beetle. "Here is your scarab," he told his startled patient.

A cosmic drama had unfolded in the young woman's head, according to Jung. Anxiety about the course of treatment prodded her collective unconscious—the locus of universal order in everyone's psyche—whose factors, or

archetypes, carried a dream into her consciousness. The archetypal dream was an image of future events already present in her unconscious, which can acquire knowledge across the barriers of space and time. The coincidence of dream and reality shocked the patient toward a new, more beneficial path of therapy; Jung notes that the scarab is a classic rebirth symbol. By a foreshadowing in dreams we experience *déjà vu,* Jung speculates, and by a flooding of archetypes into awareness we divine the *I Ching.*

"It was an extraordinarily difficult case to treat," the doctor wrote, "and up to the time of the dream little or no progress had been made. I should explain that the main reason for this was my patient's animus, which was steeped in Cartesian philosophy and clung so rigidly to its own idea of reality that the efforts of three doctors—I was the third—had not been able to weaken it. Evidently something quite irrational was needed which was beyond my powers to produce."

The young woman might find the synchronicity theory quite as baffling as the beetle's intrusion; I sympathize with her because my psyche, steeped like weak tea in Cartesian philosophy, clings feebly to its own idea of reality. But Jung developed his principle with the aid of Wolfgang Pauli, a Nobel Prize-winning quantum physicist, one of those magicians who have turned the world inside out and upside down during the last half-century. On the level of the infinite and the infinitesimal, these scientists say, anarchy and fantasy reign in equal measure, mocking the relative law and order of day-to-day existence.

Like children taking apart an old watch, scientists dismantle Newton's clockwork universe only to learn that the wheels and gears refuse to fit back together again. Scattered about the laboratory, the pieces look surreal, as if sprung from a Dali clock: here, one electron penetrating two holes in a screen simultaneously; there, a positron traveling into the past; and everywhere, neutrinos wandering without mass, weight, charge or magnetic field. In the cosmos, once an harmonious firmament, astronomers now detect quasars, pulsars, curved space, anti-matter, parallel universes and Black Holes. Amid these sub-atomic and super-galactic phantasms, the unthinkable is ordinary.

A coincidence startles us here in the middling world of hours, yards and pounds because it tampers with them so willfully, but current parapsychological studies show how malleable our measurements of reality are. In celebrated research at Duke University and elsewhere, volunteers guess the symbols on random series of hidden cards at ratios much higher than chance expectation. Distance does not affect the volunteers' success; over a continent or a year, they still achieve favorable ratios. And by concentrating on a particular card, volunteers can force it to turn up more often than anticipated. If these experiments do not mislead us, then time, space and matter occasionally yield to precognition, extrasensory perception and psychokinesis—quasi-mystical forces that may help chart the course of a scarabaeid beetle or a golden matchbox.

Chicks have the power. At Duke's Institute for Parapsychology, researchers placed newly hatched chicks under a heat lamp switched on and off by a hyper-random process—the discharge of elementary particles from radioactive material. A calculator tallied the number of times the lamp was bright or dark. With heat, the chicks "relaxed and showed every sign of enjoyment," the scientists report. Without it, they were "huddled and peeping miserably." The automated hen watched over her brood for several days, beaming far more often than not. But when the chicks were removed from the coop, the lamp was turned on just half the time —the unexpected result of the random switch.

Did the infernal apparatus sympathize with its chilly brood? Did their plight somehow connect—through a current the most gossamer filament could not carry—with the haphazard flow of elementary particles? Did the longing for light and warmth suffuse the chick-minds with psychokinesis strong enough to bend chance and flick a switch? Pose these questions to a latter-day alchemist of science or parascience, and he might reply in riddles—the truthful nonsense appropriate to the ambiguity of both the chick experiment and the real-surreal world.

The riddles tell of natural laws broken, time warped, space curved, matter dematerialized, chance biased and cause and effect estranged in the micro- and macrocosm. "We [the undivided divinity operating within us] have dreamt the world," Jorge Luis Borges has written in *Labyrinths.* "We have dreamt it as firm, mysterious, visible, ubiquitous in space and durable in time; but in its architecture we have allowed tenuous and eternal crevices of unreason which tell us it is false."

Within the facade's crevices, novelist and science historian Arthur Koestler detects a framework that brings order from chaos, method from madness. At the end of *The Roots of Coincidence*—a fine summary of research into the phenomenon—Koestler returns to basics.

Every being, he writes, has a dual character: it is both an independent whole and a dependent part of a larger system, and the balance struck between autonomy and subordination makes it stable. In the course of evolution single beings diversify, specialize and become more sophisticated, but they always rejoin a collective, giving it their newly developed qualities. As an example, Koestler cites the growing embryo: cells branch out into tissues, which eventually constitute organs. This pervasive ordering dynamic creates a higher form of unity from a more complex variety, and Koestler names it the Integrative Tendency.

Such a life-force arranges diversity into pattern the way a poet chooses diction, imagery and cadence suitable for a line, a stanza and the poem as a whole. Coincidences may state its rhymes. Koestler notes that the Tendency is a metaphor, not a principle; it marshals events according to laws both known and unknown: causality, seriality and synchronicity. Scientists glimpse the unifying force's outlines—vague shimmering contours, not the hard and fast edges of a clockwork universe. To explain their vision, they must describe not only particulars but also the matrix into which the particulars fit.

Modern curiosity about the rapport between the puzzle and its pieces harkens back to ancient speculation, both Jung and Koestler observe. "There is one common flow, one common breathing, all things are in sympathy," Hippocrates supposed, a theory echoed 23 centuries later by mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead: "Any local agitation shakes the whole universe. The distant effects are minute, but they are there." This final unity is a tenet of Buddhism, Taoism and Christian mysticism; it underlies divinatory practices and primitive religions. As in a fugue, themes of sympathy recur, overlap and grow more complex throughout history; coincidence acts as a form of counterpoint.

If an all-embracing order does apply, then the universe comes alive, more an organism than a machine. Its vitality surrounds us, improvising, arranging, composing billions of events that sometimes crisscross, marking the intersections with coincidences. Because the pinpoints mystify us, we assume they are accidental, even though they seem to engrave a design. "The miracle occurs not in contradiction to nature," St. Augustine wrote, "but in contradiction to what we know about nature." ●

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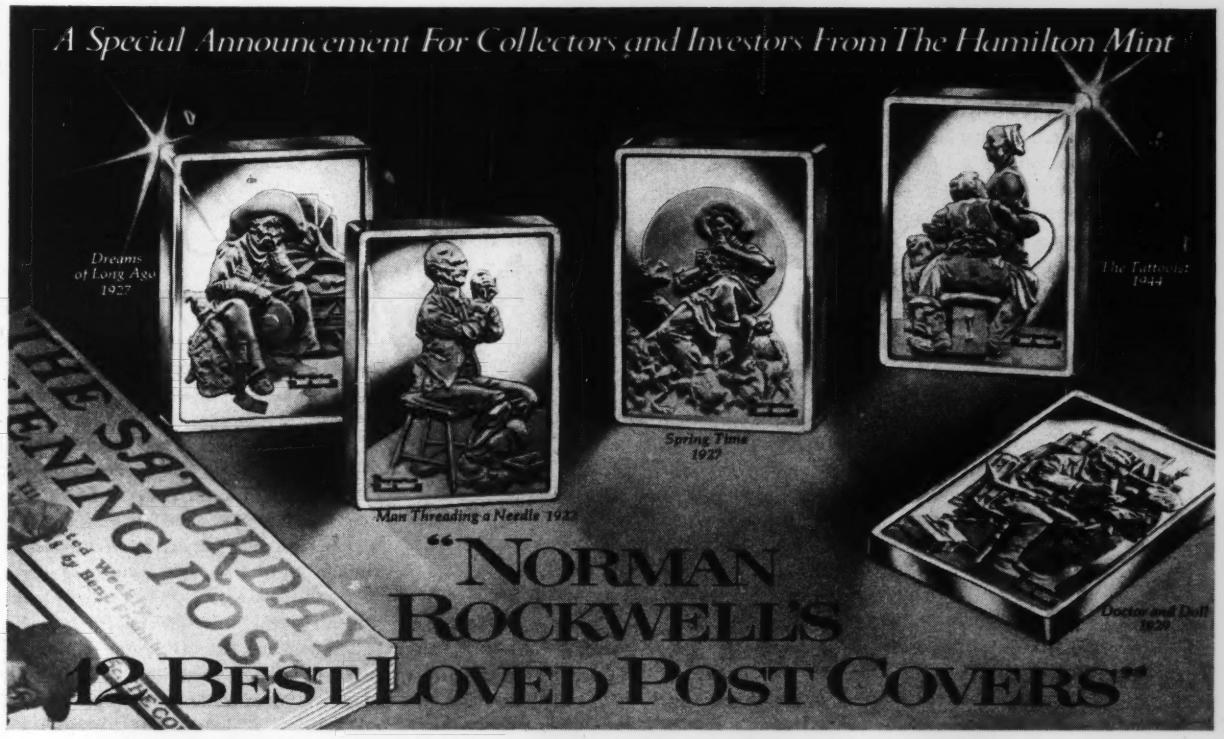
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side trips

The stuff of dreams

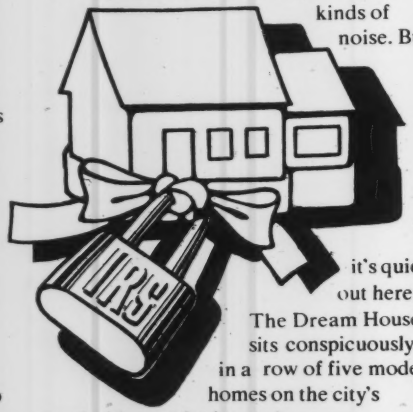
Indianapolis, Ind.—Earl and Lucy Crouch faithfully tuned their dial to the gold-plated sound of pop America and it paid off. Winners of the Dream Home Contest sponsored by Indianapolis station WIFE, they have been gifted with the bonanza of a $100,000 house. Easy Street, for sure. Then they found the snag.

Every year, regular as the spring equinox, radio stations bow to the power of the rating services and celebrate the season with giveaway sprees—an old, seductive trick that still works. In San Diego a disk jockey screams about the "ultimate wish contest." Atlanta listeners are told to stay tuned for the next secret code word—"it means cash." Rock fans in St. Louis are invited to look for the "mystery walker with pockets of cash." Elsewhere it's Elton John or Bachman Turner Overdrive in between cash calls or cars or records or wardrobes or mystery boxes or millionaire stashes. Programmers want "demographic clusters" for their rating charts and use the contest as the battle zone of the radio wars. The WIFE Dream Home Contest was the Star station chain's contribution to the freebees of radio land.

Lucy Crouch, a big, round woman of Italian heritage, sits uncomfortably on a crushed velvet chair in her new, grand surroundings. Last year, Earl and Lucy had a combined income of $2,100. This year, they owe $21,000 in taxes on the Dream House.

"We're tryin' to get a mortgage to pay for the taxes," she says. "If we have to, we'll sell the house, but I can keep the furnishings. It's like a new life."

Lucy's father was a "banana king" (handler) on Indianapolis' ethnic south side. She grew up and lived there until her "dream came true." Husband Earl has been on a disability pension since 1968. Until January, they lived in the inner city in an old house that "wasn't worth but $9,000. It was across the street from bars. We had liquor bottles in the yard and all kinds of noise. But it's quiet out here."



The Dream House sits conspicuously in a row of five model homes on the city's north side, not far from a huge new shopping center. "Don't know our way around yet," Lucy says. "Do know how to get downtown and back."

The two oldest boys, 24 and 19, have moved back home, joining two younger children. Lucy's brother Frank, a maintenance man, has moved in as well. "We're trying to add some of our own touches. Make us feel more at home." Lucy taps a table—"handmade by my oldest boy in shop class." It is plywood and sheet metal and sits next to a sofa valued at more than $1,000. Lucy would like to move in her 30-year-old kidney-shaped sofa from the old house, but she doesn't feel it would "fit in" yet. In the ornate dining room she has stocked a china cupboard valued at $1,038 with "some family hand-me-downs and stuff"—such as a Tony the Tiger set of glasses given away at gas stations. "Some of this stuff is too fancy." Lucy frowns and points toward an arrangement of dried flowers on a pedestal. "Reminds me of a funeral home." Her brother Frank, much larger than she and toothless, wipes his hands on a stretched T-shirt and offers, "That duck cost $59.73. Can you believe that?" The family chuckles as one of the sons picks up the ceramic duck and taps on the creamy walls. "It's hollow." Lucy says, "I'll sell it, if somebody wants it."

She uses that line a lot as we move through the house checking the inventory price list to look at the crystal lamps, the "original oil painting. Costs $1,200. Sell it for $1,150." On the walls, yellowed old family pictures of little kids and surprised relatives are hung in black plastic frames alongside the well-placed decorator's prints and graphics.

Lucy stops the tour to catch her breath. "We're just taking it as it comes. I know God's on our side, giving us this home and all. We used to go through model homes and dream. Now, we're enjoying living like this." Then she

remembers the tax cloud and begins to frown.

"The radio station accountant said he could take care of our taxes for $300," Earl says, looking tired. "But we went to the IRS—couldn't afford the $300. I think we're going to get the mortgage. If not, the realtor said he'd buy it back for $50,000." He looks at Lucy. "I know God's on our side," she says again.

—By Tom Cochrun

A rousing old age

College Park, Md.—A professor named Dan Leviton down here at the University of Maryland shows pornographic movies to groups of senior citizens. He says it's therapeutic. The oldsters say it's just fine, thanks.

At a typical session, as many as 30 elderly men and women sit in a darkened room down the hall from the university's gym. Leviton, a burly 43-year-old, stands next to an 8 mm projector that fills a usually pristine wall with films of the old "smoker" genre. Blue movies, stag flicks, hard-core porno—whatever they're called, the films feature plenty of close-ups of genitals in action. Only the whirring of the projector and an occasional nervous titter from the audience breaks the attentive silence.

When the last scene fades out and the lights go on, a frail woman with wispy white hair stands up. She seems to be blushing though skin as thin and white as paper, and her eyes move warily from side to side as she asks: "What do you do, Professor, when you're 85, a widow and have sex dreams at night?"

"Hell," Leviton booms without hesitation, "you enjoy them, what else?"

"If I had any guts," he says later, "I'd start a clinic where old people could wind up in bed. They certainly aren't encouraged to now. But they should be." Those are strange words for a professor of health education, a discipline that is more commonly concerned with seeing that people wash their hands after going to the bathroom. And they are stranger still from a professor at Maryland, a state-supported university with some 30,000 students that does not enjoy a progressive reputation. Yet Leviton, a former basketball coach, *has* started a clinic for old people that is unorthodox, if not revolutionary.

Almost everything about his Adult's Health and Developmental Program clashes with conventional wisdom about the aged. In the first place, Leviton takes his clients through a round of exercise and sport, despite their age. The physical acitivity, he says, is good for building up old people's body images. He also assigns each elderly client a student-clinician of the opposite sex and shows the porno movies, because he believes that a healthy, functioning sexuality is one of the best antidotes to the depression and sense of worthlessness which have become as much a part of aging as wrinkles.

Sex researchers such as William Masters and Virginia Johnson, as well as a number of gerontologists, agree with Leviton that old age does not automatically destroy sexual desire or sexual capability. The trouble is that most old people feel they are ugly and repugnant and unfit to participate in the world of sex. Leviton tries to help his clients get back in touch with their sexuality. And by encouraging the clients and clinicians to hold hands and hug if they feel like it, he tries to help the oldsters realize that they aren't repulsive. "Half of what makes our program work is sexuality," he says. "By that I mean affection, warmth, touching. But we exploit our sexuality in a positive way. This isn't some damn touchy-feely session."

Leviton runs his clinic for eight-week semesters (at $35 for those who can afford it, and free for those who can't) during the autumn and spring terms at the university. Shadows are still long most Saturdays when the "Elderbus" pulls up on campus. The oldsters are greeted with hugs by student-clinicians. Then they all stroll into Cole Field House, a huge pseudo-Georgian building that smells of rubber mats and resin and sweat.

Soon a plump woman of 65 in tight slacks is laughing wildly as she caroms about on the trampoline. Another woman in her 60s with thin, bird-like legs is taking tentative steps along a balance beam. "Hey, you're doing great!" says the young man holding her hand. Across the room, a balding 79-year-old is walking with his arm around the waist of a blonde girl barely a quarter his age. He stops once, in a patch of the sunlight which slants through dusty banks of windows, and kisses her.

Leviton believes so strongly in his program that he is trying to talk the state of Maryland into setting up satellite clinics in the public schools. So far, state officials aren't having any. But Leviton isn't discouraged. He looks at the 95 percent return rate among his clients, and he looks at people like Thomas Herrod, and he's convinced he must be doing something right.

Herrod, a slight 82-year-old who used to play piano for the Don Redmond Orchestra during the Big Band era, has been coming to the clinic since it started in the autumn of 1972. He's been married for 45 years and his wife is in her 70s. "We never have trouble with our sex life," Herrod said. "When we want it, we do it. When we don't, we don't. We don't make a fuss about it. Dan's always trying to help people realize they got to do just what they want."

Dan Leviton just smiles. Old people, he says, have a right to enjoy themselves, just like anybody else.

—Thomas J. Moran

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BILL NELSON

Cannonballing

In this country's foremost secret race, automotive madmen try to see who can drive from New York to California the fastest. Along the way, the entrants defy most laws of the highway–and most laws of gravity as well

By Timothy Carlson

"Breaker, this is The Sundancer at mile marker 48 . . . a four-wheeler westbound on Route 66. We're wonderin' about the smokey situation to Tulsa?"

"That's a ten-roger, Sundancer. This is the X-Rated Undertaker—an 18-wheeler here. There's a bear in a plain green wrapper takin' pitchers at the Claremore exit. Better back 'er down about the 25 mile marker. Right about the Big Cabin exit you can put the hammer down all the way to Tulsa, buddy."

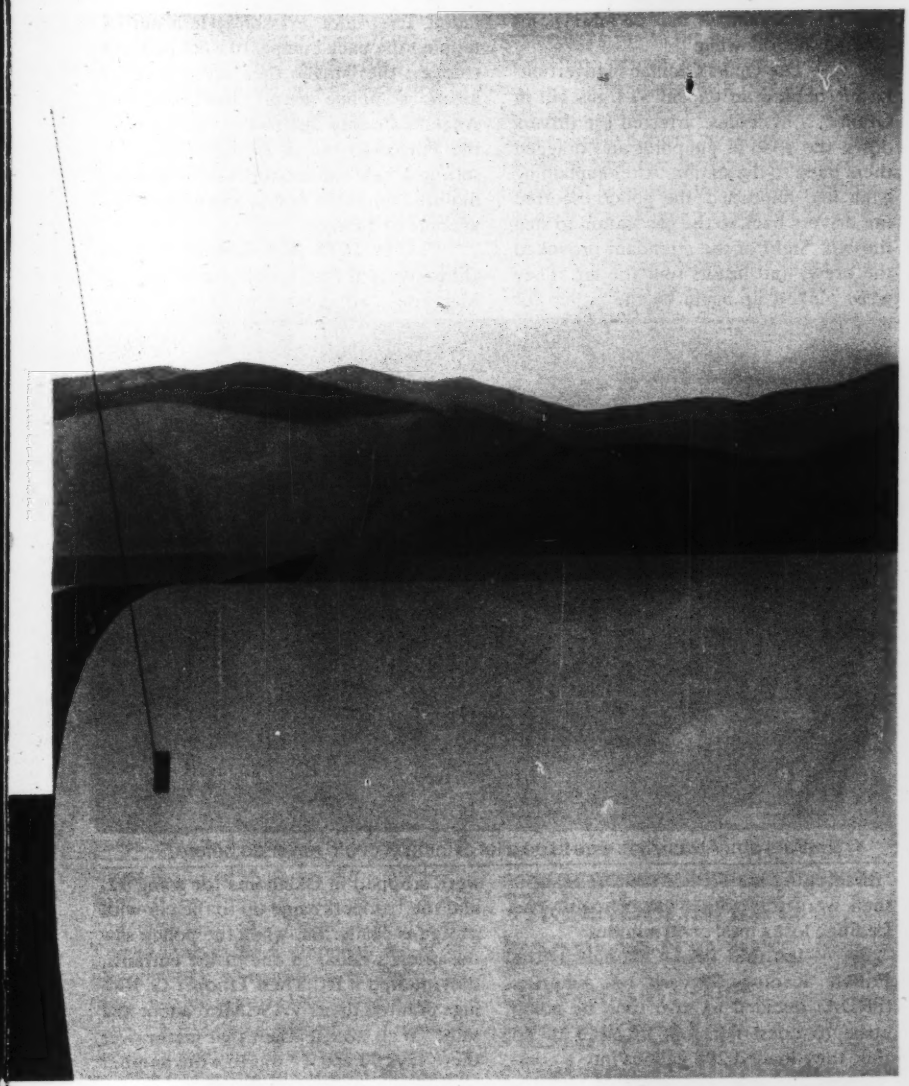
With these transmissions the voices on the Citizen's Band radio Channel 10 click off and a tremendous buzz comes from the machine. A rugged muscular man has his thumb on the microphone button. He sits staring intently, with his eyes piercing the road ahead, then scans out the back. He's in the passenger seat of a Ford Econoline van and he's sweating and he's hot and he's driven. The needle of the speedometer is pushing the 90 mph mark. Trees, gasoline stations, Stuckey signs, mile markers and exit signs are ripping inexorably past the windows. The driver is tearing into the heart of the continent at a tremendous rate of speed down this superhighway, and the message he has just received is a welcome one. He has just found out from a watchful trucker that there is an unmarked green police car taking radar clockings up ahead on the road and he'd better slow down to avoid a ticket.

Which he is very much trying to avoid, thank you. This van, marked Heyser's Cycles on the side and with the name of the driver on the door, is known to a select group of cohorts as the Polish Racing Drivers of America special, and it is hurtling down one of the main highways of America toward a destination on the Southern California coast, having left New York City some 20 hours ago, early in the evening of April 23, 1975. The van is trying to break 39 hours for the journey, and any interruption by the smokeys, the cops, would be excruciating.

The Polish Racing Drivers of America special is trying to beat 39 hours because it is one of 18 entries in the third Cannonball Baker Sea to Shining Sea Memorial Trophy Dash. The people in the Cannonball may seem insane, but they take it all very seriously. Not because there is any exorbitant prize money, because there isn't any. And not for fame, because the people in it try to keep the race a secret until it's been run. These folks are in the race for what the event's founder, Brock Yates, calls "the anarchistic barbarity of it all."

The Cannonball whatchamacallit

the continent



is one of the most improbable races this country has ever seen: a revival of open road racing in the United States—an outlaw, *sub rosa* gang of automotive sportsmen/madmen who try to see who can cross the continent the fastest. The event was founded in 1971 by Yates, senior editor of *Car and Driver* magazine, as a whimsical protest against contemporary speed laws, as an attack on the encroachments of bureaucracies everywhere (including most automobile racing sanctioning bodies), and as what one competitor called "an attack on everything decent in this country." The rules were revolutionary in their simplicity: "Entrants must drive a land-based vehicle of any configuration, with any size crew, over any route they choose, at any speed they deem practical, between New York and Los Angeles. The car covering the distance between the start and finish in the briefest time will be declared the winner. There are no other rules."

Depending on how you look at it, the wild motoring that typifies the Dash confirms two wildly conflicting opinions of the event. To Yates, who calls himself the "Dr. Frankenstein of the Cannonball," the race shows that "good drivers in good cars can use the interstate system of the United States at considerably higher speeds than are now legal." Others do not react so calmly to the race. News of the Cannonball became widespread when an article by Yates about the first event appeared in *Sports Illustrated* the week before the second began. Ultimately, the publicity reached Indiana politician Al Huber, who read a lurid article written by Indianapolis *Star* sportswriter Robin Miller. Entitled "Jailhouse Rock at 79 mph," the story spread over two pages all the details of Miller's ride with Wes Dawn to a seventh-place finish in the 1972 Cannonball—a race in which they tied a record for most speeding tickets (five). Huber, executive vice-chairman of the Indiana Traffic Safety Council, was outraged.

"It's not a race, it's a crime spree," he said.

Huber granted the "possibility" that the Indianapolis 500, on a closed course with safety barriers to protect the crowds from the beasts on the track, might have something to do with the development of the automobile, but he was dead certain that there was absolutely nothing constructive about the Cannonball. Huber thought the publicity given the event was a short-fuse time bomb for future generations. "These guys are bragging about their speeding arrests. If they really were stopped for driving 105 in a 50 mile per hour zone, they should have been in jail somewhere along the line." Besides endangering the lives of "thousands" of motorists who shared the roads with them, Huber felt that youngsters would then feel they could race with impunity. He noted that 400 people had been turned down as entrants to the 1972 race (36 had been accepted). Next time, he said, there would be 4,000 clamoring to get in, and he envisioned other drivers organizing other races. Huber wrote letters to the U.S. Department of Transportation and to the Indiana state police, advising that descriptions and license plates of all entries should be noted in Manhattan and relayed to all state police ahead on the route.

ILLUSTRATION BY DENNIS LUCZAK

As it happened, the following November the Arab-Israeli war and the ensuing energy crisis sent the Cannonball back into the oblivion whence it came. Patriotic adherence to the 55 mph speed limit and the anticipation of gas rationing made the thought of racing on the highways nothing short of treason. Besides, entrants such as the 1971 Polish Racing Drivers' van, with 298 gallons of fuel on board, would have been handicapped trying to tank up with a 10-gallon limit per customer and waiting lines of up to three hours at many gas stations.

As streaking and Watergate came and went, legends of the first two Cannonball events took refuge in the battered consciousnesses of car freaks. The incidents of the first two races were remembered in small nooks of the automotive world with the poignancy of gunfighter ballads sung long after the West was tamed. In a world where the achievement of going to the moon was beyond emotional comprehension, the tales of Cannonballers on the run from the state troopers assumed legendary proportions. And the best thing about the legends was their democratic nature. In the Cannonball the police function as a great leveler—the event's true wild card. While in normal racing, costs have become astronomical and big money can buy a winning car, in the Cannonball anybody with wits and luck could win—especially if the cops slowed down one of the better-equipped entrants.

In 1971 Yates won with internationally acclaimed Grand Prix driver Dan Gurney, in a Ferrari Daytona, certainly not an everyman's vehicle nor an everyday driver. (They set the all-time Cannonball record, covering 2,900 miles in 35 hours, 54 minutes—an average of 81 mph.) But what saved the event from becoming a boring elitist sport was the fact that Yates and Gurney were only able to shake a Cadillac driven by Cambridge lawyer Larry Opert and two friends by taking a shortcut in Arizona. In keeping with the anarchic spirit of the Cannonball, Opert and company were transporting the vehicle on a driveaway deal and meekly had agreed not to drive the car after 9:00 p.m. or before 8:00 a.m., or drive over 75 mph. All the conditions were violated before they left Manhattan, and they might have won if they had had fewer than the five tickets which caused them to lose the several hours that were their margin of defeat. The Ferrari escaped with a single ticket and, in one long stretch of icy roads in New Mexico, could not keep up with the Cadillac, which kept blasting away at its 115-mph-or-bust pace. In the second event a Cadillac, again a driveaway deal but this time driven from Michigan to the starting line, was the first of 27 entries to finish.

Several vignettes found their way into the Cannonball hall of infamy, including the following:

—The Opert Cadillac inadvertently left behind an unpaid $14 gas bill in Grants, N.M. Police arrested the drivers down the road at gunpoint and dragged them back to the station. After explaining what had happened, the police escorted the drivers back to the gas station to sign the bill. Sight of the attendant provoked the crew, and insults rent the air. They were picked up again by the police for "threatening the life" of the attendant—then were told to get out of town. The Cadillac lost a total of 40 minutes.

—In the first Cannonball the Polish Racing Drivers of America (PRDA) decided to save time by going coast to coast nonstop. In order to do this, they loaded 298 gallons into a complicated series of fuel cells in a Chevy van. The three drivers, including professional Tony Adamowicz, showed up at the starting line in flameproof Nomex overalls, which prompted *Car and Driver* editor Steve Smith to remark: "They'll need more than fireproof uniforms if those goddamn gas tanks in that thing explode. If those 300 gallons let go, it'll make Amchitka look like a wet match!" They did not calculate the gas right, though, and had to take on 78 gallons in Albuquerque; but PRDA barely beat out the Cadillac for second place by cat-and-mouse maneuvering on the L. A. freeway.

—In 1971 a Travco mobile home's drivers carried on a coast-to-coast poker game. During the 1972 Cannonball, with stock car ace Joe Frasson at the wheel, the Travco ran into serious trouble in Arizona. Whipping down a tortuous series of switchbacks in the Prescott National Forest, with thousands of feet of drop at the edge of a narrow road, the brakes faded. Ever cool, Frasson rode it out by tapping the back bumper of a cooperative trucker; the Travco then saved time by hiring a police escort from the Los Angeles County line to the finish line at the Portofino Inn in Redondo Beach—setting a new transcontinental record for mobile homes (44 hours, 53 minutes—an average of 64 mph).

—In 1972 Jack Cowell, Richard Gilmartin and Pete Brock teamed up in a Mercedes, all dressed as clerics. They were stopped in Oklahoma for going 92, and the troopers came up to the car with shotguns ready. But when the police saw the priest's collar of one of the entrants, they melted a bit. Then Trooper G. Ridings pointed to his VASCAR readout and said: "Well now, Father, that meter over there says 92 and if I was to write another number on the ticket, that makes me a liar. Now you wouldn't want that, would you?" Cost: $95.

—In the 1972 race Yates mistook a police cruiser for a normal car. Driver Bob Brown motored by the cops at 114 mph and, not knowing what else to do, just kept on going at 110 mph in Arizona. The cruiser caught up with the Yates Dodge rather quickly and just kept running alongside for 10 minutes. Completely mystified by the failure of the cruiser to haul them in immediately, driver Brown was further startled when

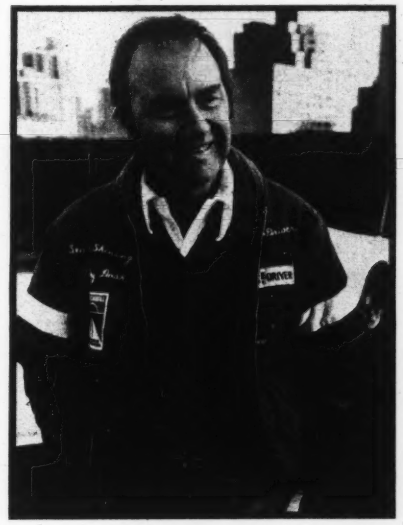
Entrant Jim Atwell, 54: "free to do a lot of things I could never do before."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM CARLSON

Writer and photographer Tim Carlson, a native of Daytona Beach, lives in Cambridge, Mass.

the trooper, "with what appeared to be a *friendly* blink of the lights" (he wrote later in *Car and Driver*), faded off an exit ramp to a nearby truck stop.

With the coming of 1975, it was clear that the automobile wasn't yet ready for the graveyard. The Daytona 500 drew 110,000 fans, the largest crowd in its history, and once Kissinger and Faisal conspired to turn on the taps again, gas was readily available for those who could pay the stiffer prices. Due to the energy crisis, racing groups had tried to compensate for their image as prime, symbolic fuel-wasters by cutting down the distance of races; but then they conducted surveys to show that the whole field at Indianapolis used less fuel than it takes to charter a New York Giants jet to the West Coast and back. The enthusiasts also had to fight the fact that the 55 mph



Yates, the Cannonball's Dr. Frankenstein.

speed limit had stuck—and it stuck like a bone in the throat of such men as Yates and his *Car and Driver* constituents. They thought the Cannonball might be brought out of mothballs to fight that most terrible legacy of the gas shortage.

A small ad placed in *Autoweek* drew immediate response. Yates was careful not to get too big a field. More was at stake this time than pure fun, and he had learned a few lessons from the last race. He acted as a committee of one to weed out any of the flakes and crazies who had begun to drift into the 1972 race. First he demanded a $200 donation to charity, any charity, as an entry fee, along with $50 for $2 million worth of Lloyds of London liability coverage on every car. Over 200 responded asking for entry forms, and of about 75 serious entries, Yates took 22.

"Last time we ran, there was guys that showed up at the garage that nobody knew," said Pal Parker of the Travco crew. They looked supiciously like they were either doped up or pilled up or just plain on the wrong side of the line which defines the difference between the rugged individualism with an echo of libertarianism that is Yates' philosophy and the dangerous Hunter Thompson-persona that no one but children and Hells Angels take seriously. "There was guys rolling up to the line with *unvented* 50-gallon drums of gasoline rolling around loose in the back of vans! Those jackrabbits looked like they were ready to pile through towns and stoplights. Hell, we went fast but never to endanger. I could just see one of those guys T-boning a school bus—killing 15 children."

A few days after the Bicentennial guns had blazed away for Gerald Ford at Lexington and Concord, an odd assortment of cars started arriving at a dingy garage 200 miles to the south, at the corner of 31st and Lexington on the East Side of Manhattan. Whisked to the roof of the Red Ball garage—out of sight of the street and most regular customers but still in view of the Manhattan skyscraper-line—the field for the 1975 Cannonball Baker Sea to Shining Sea Memorial Trophy Dash had agreed to rendezvous 24 hours ahead of the proposed April 23 starting time.

The field was an eclectic lot and showed the discrimination of Yates' pruning. As in previous Cannonballs, several rumored entries failed to show. Hunter Thompson's editors had wanted him in a Ken Kesey-like van a couple of years ago, and Thompson himself had said he might enter, according to Yates, "if he was allowed to go from Key West to Big Sur."

The Libertarians became the first drivers in the history of the Cannonball to be stopped for child molesting

But race day found Thompson in the process of evacuating from Saigon, and someone said he had taken the easier assignment. Robert Kennedy Jr. was trying very hard to get hold of a Maserati from a car dealer who was a friend of the family, but Yates turned him down because the last-minute preparations might lead to trouble. George V. Higgins, tough detective-novel author of *The Friends of Eddie Coyle,* was in serious consultation with auto racing writer Peter Manso about entering a Porsche turbine car—then he vetoed the deal. "It wasn't because of possible legal troubles," said Higgins, a prosperous Boston lawyer and a car freak. "It was a human question. I had visions of piling into some insurance salesman and family somewhere in the Midwest. Or I might be killed. I just don't believe I'm qualified."

Yates also weeded out people on the basis of things like handwriting. "There were too many Porsches," he added, "so I had to cut some guys out. . . . And I had to tell some guys they couldn't come back because they didn't use their heads the last time." When Opert applied late, Yates made no special effort to get him in the race. "Nobody has to get five tickets. Those guys just drove flat to the wood all the way." The main criteria were that people had to be level-headed and to have had at least some experience in the milieu of high-speed automobiles. "It's my megalomania," said Yates. "I like what the old promoter of Brooklands in England used to say: 'The right crowd with no crowding.' "

Yates was upset by a leak of plans for the race to the Detroit *Free Press* by 1972 co-winner Fred Olds of Grosse Pointe. He didn't mind all the publicity in the world after the race had begun, but he still remembered Huber's blast and he was worried about a rumor that the governor of Ohio had threatened to fry anybody caught Cannonballing through his state. "I can see it now," said Yates. "When we come back from the dinner to start the race there'll be all these garbage trucks around the Red Ball, and there'll be cops there with bullhorns saying,'This race has been injuncted!' Ha! Then we won't have to run this cockamamie thing."

Yates was truly nervous. A local NBC crew would be filming the start, a preview would be run on WNEW the noon of the race, and the AP had a man in the Travco mobile home.

"This race scares my ass," Yates said a few hours before the race began. He was standing on the roof of the Red Ball, looking over his White Dodge Challenger. "I did it once and I don't know how to stop doing it. If something goes wrong, it would bomb automotive enthusiasm back to the Stone Age!"

Yates, a bear-like man of 41, delved into the politics and philosophy of the Cannonball. He felt good drivers going at high speeds on the interstates are safe

because they're paying attention to what they're doing, while those cruising at 55 lapse into an Orwellian coma. Since many of the Cannonball entries travel at over 100 mph and still get 14-18 miles per gallon, the only way to reduce gas guzzling, he feels, is through taxation, not only of gasoline, but of low-efficiency automobiles. He also believes that the 55 mph limit is as unenforceable as Prohibition. One of his fears is of "a blob of bureaucracy overrunning everything. . . . The speed laws are a lot like the marijuana laws; once established, the law enforcement apparatus is self-perpetuating." Yates has been expounding his philosophy in his *Car and Driver* column for about nine years now, and in the office there are signs like "High Performance Cars Don't Kill, Low Performance Drivers Do."

"I still consider myself an effete Eastern liberal," said Yates, "but you don't find many car freaks in the New York media world. The thing about this race is that once you get out in the country, away from the coasts, you sense a great feeling of optimism, a kind of overwhelming feeling of a kind of cornball American feeling—like it's going to be all right out there."

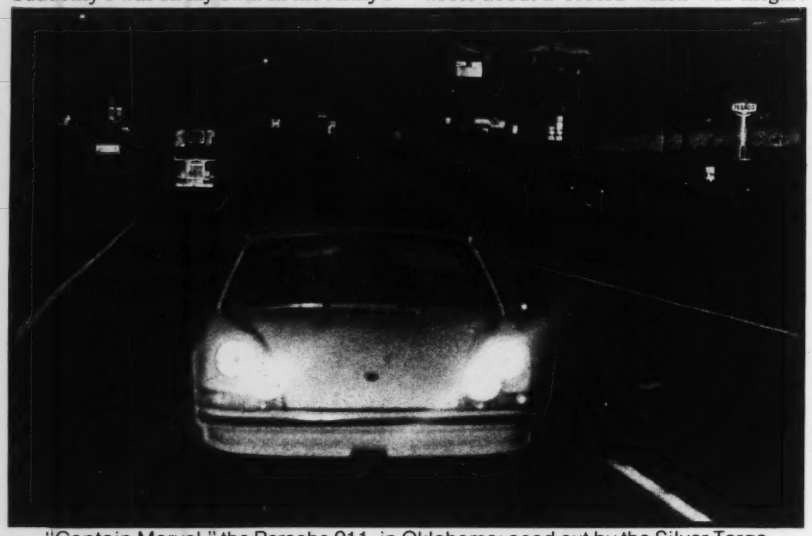
A look at some of the entrants hardly showed them to be a dangerous lot, but the machinery was not altogether tame. There was a white Ferrari Dino to be driven by a Florida developer named Jack May and a topflight SCCA mechanic, Rick Cline. It was equipped with wide-bodied radial tires, a specially designed driving seat, high intensity driving lights, auxiliary fuel tanks with a 29-gallon capacity, heavy-duty shock absorbers, a Snooper unit for detecting police radar and a Citizen's Band radio set to tune in truckers' reports of upcoming patrol cars. The equipment was pretty standard on all entries in 1975, and the Citizen's Band radios marked a technological advance since the last Cannonball. The entrants would move like revolutionary fish in an electronic sea of radio warnings—an unholy alliance of the fast-car set with the tough old independent truckers, who rely on their "ears" to make a buck and who, as an economic imperative, are, like the Cannonballers, trying to beat the 55 mph limit.

Other hot entries included a Silver 1973 Porsche 911 Targa driven by Leo Lynch and Daniel Rowzie. It was capable of 165 mph. Yates and 1972 co-winner Steve Behr, who will drive on the Formula 500 circuit this season, were entered in Yates' updated 1972 Dodge Challenger, which was capable of 140 mph in a long gear. Three GM engineers showed up in a bright red TransAm which looked like it was running 100 mph standing still. And Jim Atwell and Chuck Stanton came in a brand new $15,000 1975 red Porsche Carrera with everything in it. It was capable of 136 mph on a strict scale and looked faster.

Atwell had some reservations about the technology enveloping the Cannonball. "With all the modifications, the fuel cells and CB radios, I think you're making yourself part of the establishment—you're using the devices the establishment would use," he said. "I believe the spirit of the Cannonball is a return to some kind of purity."

Atwell feels the ambiguity of being in an anti-establishment race acutely. Until four years ago, Atwell had always been in the establishment. "I had been in the Army for 29 years when I retired. Suddenly I was on my own. In the Army I used to fly planes all over, but now with all the radio landings and flight plans required you can't fly free in an engine anymore and I don't do it. I fly gliders now. Since I retired, I'm free to do a lot of things I never could do before." Atwell is 54. His wife died in 1971 of cancer, and he made his $200 donation to the American Cancer Society. When he finished the race, he would fly back to Virginia to meet his new wife, 24-year-old Jeannie.

The not so racy entrants ran the gamut from a '51 Studebaker to the Travco van to the PRDA van. Some lean, hardbitten Westerners were in a Chevy pickup with a camper over the back. It was the least imposing vehicle, and Jack McCoy, a Western NASCAR racing star, would drive it with his wife and Gary Johnson. There was also the EZ-Wider Rolling Gold Mazda station wagon with Jeff Martini of *Rolling Stone* and Pierre Honegger of *Time*; a huge silver 1975 Buick Electra that looked like a battleship, driven by Ocean Powerboat racer Sandy Satullo of Copper Kettle fame, and an elegant cerulean blue English touring car, a 1969 Bristol. The Bristol's driver, Anatoly Arutunoff, is on the Oklahoma Safety Council and the State Highway Users' Council and had packets of libertarian literature to give away at every gas stop. Co-driver Bill Pryor, a commercial artist, had just set a new world record for flying a paper airplane—18½ seconds. Pryor wore a cravat and his license plate read "Hauteur." There were libertarian bumper stickers as well reading "Federal Aid My Ass It's Your Money." When Yates heard that Pryor's record was accepted by Guinness, he was moved to grouse: "I submitted the Cannonball record and they said if they wrote about a record which was illegal, they would jeopardize their company in England. It's against English law or something. . . . I don't understand it. They keep writing about eating contests where the guys *die*, for Christ's sake!"



"Captain Marvel," the Porsche 911, in Oklahoma: aced out by the Silver Targa.

As the start of the race grew closer, the competitors milled around and exchanged small talk about strategy and possible tactics, then posed for a picture being taken by the *Car and Driver* art director. There was talk about the virtues of the Northern Route versus the Southern, low visibility (such as the pickup truck), fuel cells, reducing "down" or stopped time, the Convoy Concept (in which only one car out of a chain of fast-moving cars can be arrested by one officer at a time), about how no one was going to ship their car air freight, or use duplicate cars, or lay down false roadblocks. The Polish Racing Drivers were

wondering how they were going to piss with stops over 12 hours apart.

The team leader of a green 164 Volvo, Steve Fernald of Indianapolis, had the most ingenious tactics. Pledging a reporter to secrecy, he revealed his plan: In his back seat was a man who would look sick. Fernald had a letter from a doctor at the University of California at La Jolla stating that the man was a deep-sea diver from Key West who was donating his kidney to his brother on the West Coast. The diver was still recovering from a case of the bends, and therefore could not fly. The letter finished by asking for all available assistance from highway patrolmen along the way to get the man across country as quickly as possible.

As Fernald showed the letter to the reporter, he pointed to a phone in his back seat. "We have the names and telephone numbers—home, office and secretaries' names—of all commissioners of Highway Safety along the route. We're going to call each state as we reach them and ask them to assist us with a highway patrol escort at top speed to the state line, and also to ask them to relay our request to the next state guys and on down the line. If it works, we'll get a police escort all across the country."

The Polish Racing Drivers of America van: after 450 miles, behind by 1½ hours.

The 50 men and two women who would be racing in the Cannonball jammed into a conference room at *Car and Driver* magazine at One Park Avenue for the drivers' meeting. Everyone there signed releases absolving Yates and company, and the document was notarized and given the official stamp of Cannonball Enterprises, The Indian Creek Mississippi Drainage District No. 1 stamp. The speech of the moment was a Yates performance and it was stirring. Yates was wearing his blue windbreaker with a huge Cannonball Baker Sea to Shining Sea Memorial Trophy Dash insignia on the back, along with the *Car and Driver* stickers on the front and in little white lettering *Sunday Driver* (the title of his book) on the pocket. He was a little uneasy at first.

"I feel a little like Lord Cardigan addressing the Light Brigade before the Charge," Yates began. "About to throw you into the cannon fire of highway patrols from coast to coast."

After clearing up some details, he launched into the political point of it all: "So be on your best deportment, because in a way, more than in any other competitive event being run in the U.S. right now—you represent the needs and feelings of enthusiast drivers. If you guys screw up out there, and hurt somebody, especially anybody else, you can really set this thing back a long way. Not the Cannonball, but fast driving in fast cars, and that's why this thing is a horrible gamble, and you are the gamblers.

"The neat thing about this event is that it's so neat and so clean that we'll do the bloody thing and nobody'll know we've done it until we get there. If we can pull that off it'll be nice to be able to say, 'Hey, Establishment! You dumb asses! You're out there enforcing a silly law and we just sent 20 cars across the country in 36 hours. Now what the hell does that mean?' "

Yates finished by adding: "I swear to God, if I could be convinced that speed laws contributed to traffic safety I'd cancel it right now. But I don't think they have any relationship and that's why I'm running this thing."

Minutes before the scheduled 7:30 p.m. start, Yates said, "All those guys who said they would take it easy are gonna go balls to the wall." In front of the Red Ball, local television crews turned their klieg lights on knots of competitors, their cars and their friends. Wives and girlfriends and Pekinese were kissed goodbye. The NBC affiliate climbed into the mobile home to ride with the Travco team to the outskirts of the city and film the first of five elaborate meals to be dished out on the transcontinental dash. Starter Jim Williams handed Travco lead-off driver William Jeanes the time card and the great lumbering beast was off and running, acknowledging the cheers of the crowd with several honks of its horn and a few winks of the high intensity driving lights. Jeanes rounded the first corner in a controlled drift, and, with a great whoosh and whine of the engine, disappeared into the night.

A few minutes later Yates and Behr punched out on the Red Ball clock and began what they hoped to be a very low profile, high speed journey to the Portofino Inn in Redondo Beach. The powerful engine of the white Dodge was heavily muffled, and the car did not rumble and shake with dragstrip thunder. Behr stopped patiently at all stoplights and slipped toward the Lincoln Tunnel, waiting for Pennsylvania before they opened it up.

At the Red Ball, soft spring showers began to fall. As the cars took off and swooped into the night, fewer and fewer people were left to cheer each departure. Save for the crackle and talk of the CB radios, the Cannonballers were embarking on an exercise in isolation—each car armed with secret routes and schedules and subterfuges. Whether riding the high Northern route or the low Southern curve, by midnight they would all be swallowed up in the lonely four-lanes of this vast continent, all headed for that same golden coast that lured the Donner Party 125 years before. Of all the fears that lurked in the breasts of the Cannonballers as they set out, there was one grimmer than all the rest. There were a lot of nutty looking people hanging around the start, and if one of them was working for the Feds—you could just imagine convoys of state troopers surrounding each car like North Korean cutters nabbing the *Pueblo. It would be worse than death or torture to be forced to drive 55 mph the whole way.* Just such a possibility hastened the retirement of one of the 1971 entrants. "I know a guy who can steal hubcaps off cars going faster than that," said an original Polish Racing Driver, Oscar Kovaleski. "This year, the greatest challenge will be in staying

awake at 55 mph, and I'm getting too old for that kind of nonsense."

Trying to follow the Cannonball as it spreads over the continent is like watching a series of absurd flash photographs or a series of short film takes. Whatever the original, ostensible purpose was, it is lost in the blur of getting there.

—In a hurry to get to New Jersey to try out their kidney transplant gambit on the highway commissioner, the Steve Fernald—Fred Olds green Volvo runs four red lights in Manhattan. When they try the telephone, all they can get is a New Jersey state trooper who responds: "Fuck him! If he can't fly, let 'im die!" Fernald decides that this just shows that "the department of motor safety doesn't give a shit about human life." Undaunted, the Volvo abandons the deep-sea diver routine and shifts to a flat-out strategy instead.

—Next in line for a rude jolt is the Dodge. Racing along the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Yates-Behr team is betrayed by a trucker. As they come up on an 18-wheeler at a highly inflationary rate of speed, Yates and Behr hear the driver break into Channel 10, the trucker's East Coast frequency: "Holy cow! That looked like a race car going by! He musta been going 140! Hey, some smokey oughta pick him up. That guy's dangerous!"

At that point a trooper breaks into Channel 10. "This is a smokey. What's his mile marker?"

Shocked, Beher immediately ducks into a truck stop and parks the Dodge between two big tractor trailers. After 30 minutes of hiding, he gingerly returns to the chase. Later, one of the entrants who had no trouble with the police or truckers said, "The trucker might have overreacted, but it's a good idea to tell 'em you're clean when you've got the hammer down like that. That guy probably had a heart attack when he saw Behr coming. He didn't have any marking on that car, and the trucker probably thought he was a smokey in a plain white wrapper."

—The Libertarians hand out stacks of leaflets on "Individual Liberty" to bewildered gas station attendants, and continue winging along the longer Southern route in their jaunty blue Bristol. On the outskirts of Charleston, West Virginia, they sight a pretty young girl at a stoplight. "Hey, what kind of a car is that?" asks the coal country Lolita. Gentlemen to the core, the Libertarians offer her a ride. Immediately a police cruiser jumps on their tail and the blue lights go on. Arutunoff and Pryor are apprehended and taken to the city jail for questioning about serious matters. The girl was 15 years old and a runaway. Were they thinking about taking her across state lines? Five hours of grilling later, they get back on the road. The Libertarians thus became the first drivers in the history of the Cannonball to be stopped for child molesting. "And I had my deputy sheriff's badge with me the whole time and never remembered to use it," Pryor said later, ruefully.

—Believing the much longer Southern route to be freer of prowling smokeys, Leo Lynch in the Silver Targa Porsche is disappointed. After two tickets in Virginia, Lynch gets desperate and decides to outrun a third, since his car is likely the fastest anywhere on the highways that day—it is capable of a true 165 mph. A little later, Bill Warner and Tom Nehl, driving at a much more sedate pace in their Porsche 911 and using the CB handle of "Captain Marvel," hear reports of troopers all over the East Coast hunting the Silver Targa.

—At 3:57 a.m. the Ferrari passes the Polish Racing Drivers of America (PRDA) van 80 miles from Columbus, Ohio. It is raining so hard that the driver of the van feels like he's in a car wash, but the white car screams by at nearly 100 mph, its ultrabright lights cleaving into the night. Brief radio contact is made. "Suwannee River Boy, what was your departure time?" "Polish Special, this is Suwannee River Boy. Ten-oh-seven. What was yours?" The Poles are embarrassed to report 8:35. After 450 miles they are an hour and a half behind. The Ferrari is averaging over 80 mph in the rain, and seems to be matching the 1972 Yates/Gurney record pace.

—As the PRDA van approaches the gateway to the west arch in St. Louis at 10:30 a.m., EDT, the spirit of the team rises. Like the rabbit who eventually lost to the turtle, the white Ferrari races past them again. What happened? the Polish team asks on the CB. "250 Green Stamps just outside of Dayton, Ohio," is the Ferrari's answer. The Ferrari's radar snooper failed to go off soon enough and they were caught by a trooper before they could slow from 100 mph. Brought to a justice of the peace just before dawn, owner Jack May posted the bond of $250 while partner Rick Cline fueled up. "We combined a gas stop with a jail stop," says May, "and saved five minutes." Their average drops well below 80 mph. When the J.P. asked why they were going over 100 mph in the rain, May answers, "I guess we were a little overexuberant."

Winners Rick Cline and Jack May (with wreath): victory at Redondo Beach.

—After a night of hard driving, the green Volvo is in contention for the lead. Screaming into Indianapolis, Fernald and Olds are just behind the Yates-Gurney record pace and are way ahead of the Ferrari. Then a full dress-bubbletop attacks from the rear.

Fernald gets the message and switches on his public address loudspeaker. "Officer!" he calls out. "It is *imperative* that we get to California as soon as possible. I'm from the Indianapolis area. Can you help us?" As Olds tells it, there was something appealing in the ingenuousness of the request that had been missing in the deep sea diver trick. Fernald just looked and sounded like he knew what he was doing. Running along-

side at high speed, the trooper stared at the Volvo for a while. Finally the trooper's eyes lit up: he snapped on his mike and, with a big grin on his face, said, "C'mawn! C'mawn! C'mawn!" He then led them around the city and all the way to the county line at 105 mph.

All during that lightning escort Fernald heard the voices of the truckers on the CB channels. "There's a Tijuana taxi comin' up fast. Watch it!"—followed by the shocked exclamations, "And there's a green car right behind him *chasin'* it!? What's going on?"

—The green Volvo loses half an hour in Missouri when a trooper sticks with them for an hour. While trying to make up time in Kansas, they're zeroed in on by two smokeys, one in front and the other behind. By that time, Fernald has picked up a half-dozen code names of truckers he's heard back East, and he uses four of them to confuse the troopers. Switching voices like a ventriloquist, he feeds the confused bears false mile marker positions from Skinflint, Mudflap and Redeye Express. "I just spotted that green Volvo at mile marker such and such," said Fernald as Mudflap, and the trooper would zoom ahead looking for the phantom car. For a time the crafty Fernald orchestrated one trooper half a mile ahead and the other half a mile behind, all the while being careful not to bring about a fatal overlap. After miles of electronic blind man's bluff, the Volvo shakes both troopers, but it has lost too much time.

—As dusk falls for the second night of the Cannonball and contestants run exhausted into the Western states, the impressions become more fragmented. Crossing the New Mexico line, the Silver Targa shrieks by the Porsche 911, Captain Marvel, with a *rrowww* sound that threatens to break windows all the way to Albuquerque. Captain Marvel wonders how the Silver Targa made it through all those states with that unexpurgated exhaust. He has been hustling along at 85 mph, and the Silver Targa goes flying by him as if he were standing still, at 135 mph.

—After losing about an hour in Missouri to a false smokey report, Yates and Behr endure more humiliation in Arizona. They can't find the shortcut they'd planned to take, so they muddle through a more traditional route. During a gas stop in St. Josephs, Arizona, Yates is shocked as Behr breaks down and goes for some food. "Behr went over to a greasy spoon, bought some raunchy ol' tubesteaks and garfed 'em down," said Yates. "I couldn't believe him *stopping* and *paying money* like that, but by then we were so far behind we figured it didn't matter."

At the California line, the Ferrari passes the Dodge on the right at 130 mph. "We thought they were the police, so we slowed down," said Yates. "When they went by, I said, 'Shit! It's the Indians!' " Having started two and a half hours behind Yates, the Ferrari realizes they are way ahead of their most feared competitors on elapsed time. They don't know where the Portofino is exactly, so they ask Yates for directions via the CB radio. Behr doesn't want to tell them anything, but Yates gives them the route.

—Coming into California, the PRDA van still has hopes of breaking 40 hours when the engine starts rocking and spitting. The last hour of 105 mph speeds has affected the engine. Mechanic Bob Turkovich removes the engine cover next to the driver's knee and starts working on the motor as driver Brad Niemcek slows down to 70 mph. While everyone concentrates on the motor, the van passes the scene of a terrible accident in the opposite lane. A tractor trailer, one of the Cannonballers' allies against the police and the speed laws, has jackknifed and is twisted in a steaming heap upside down across two lanes of traffic.

The Travco saved time by hiring a police escort from the Los Angeles County line to the finish at the Portofino Inn in Redondo Beach

—Optimist to the end, Yates makes some quick calculations. If they can average 100 mph for the last three hours, they still have a chance. Later, the goal is 118 for the last hour. When it becomes 200 mph from Anaheim on in, they are reconciled to defeat. Because they get lost on an L.A. freeway, May and Cline, the Ferrari drivers, arrive a few minutes behind Yates, but they are still more than two hours ahead on elapsed time. With five minutes left to break the Yates-Gurney record, the Ferrari asks directions to the Portofino at a Redondo Beach gas station. When told it is just down the street, May screeches down the street and into the parking lot and sprints to the registration desk to have his time card punched. He believes he is too late, but when he glances at his card, he lets out a whoop. Having crossed the country in 35 hours and 53 minutes, they have broken the old record by one minute. When car builder Gurney, then hard at work preparing Bobby Unser's Eagle for the Indianapolis 500, is asked for his reaction, he demands that the clocks be checked.

At the Portofino desk, every team is given a bottle of warm champagne. The Ferrari is the winner by two hours. Second goes to the innocuous Chevy pickup with a camper unit in the back. By taking the central route through Kansas City, Wichita and Dalhart, Texas, the Chevy's drivers manage to finish in 37:50. Yates and Behr are third in 38:03.

Amazingly enough, all 18 who started finish.

The Libertarians trail in last in 49 hours. Slowed to 30 mph by a howling dust storm just outside of Riverside, California, the Travco mobile home team fails to match their 1972 pace and finishes in 45:36. The green Volvo is tenth in 40:31, and PRDA is eleventh in 40:37.

The total number of traffic tickets can't be precisely determined, but it is under 12. The field averages 71 mph. Yates calculates for the three Cannonballs: the finishers have averaged over 70 mph; 54 cars have traveled over 160,000 miles and there has been only one minor accident—in 1972 the all-girl team had a minor fender shunt in El Paso. Yates can breathe easily again; everyone is safe.

After a long sleep, several of the competitors turn on televisions in their rooms. There is an advertisement for a new David Carradine movie premiering in Los Angeles called *Death Race 2,000.* The ad begins with a weird-looking race car screaming through a desert and crashing through a police barrier back onto a road. "They raced across a continent!" shouts the announcer. Then a jet strafes very near the car, which zooms off toward the horizon. "They've declared war on the race!" shouts a voice from the soundtrack.

At the party the next evening, the euphoria of surviving had worn a bit thin. Maybe it had been too easy. Yates declares that the next time the Cannonball is run "we're gonna send a telegram to all the state police on the route and tell 'em we're coming!"

Contacted by the press afterwards, spoilsport Huber was asked what he thought about the race.

"Are they going to run it again?"

"No. They just ran it a week ago."

"I guess they didn't kick up much dust this time," he said. ●

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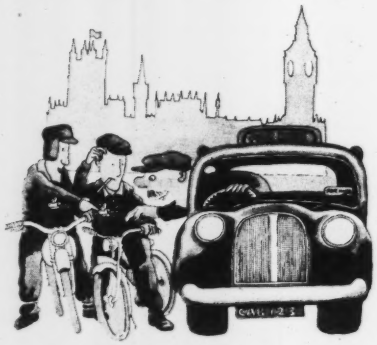

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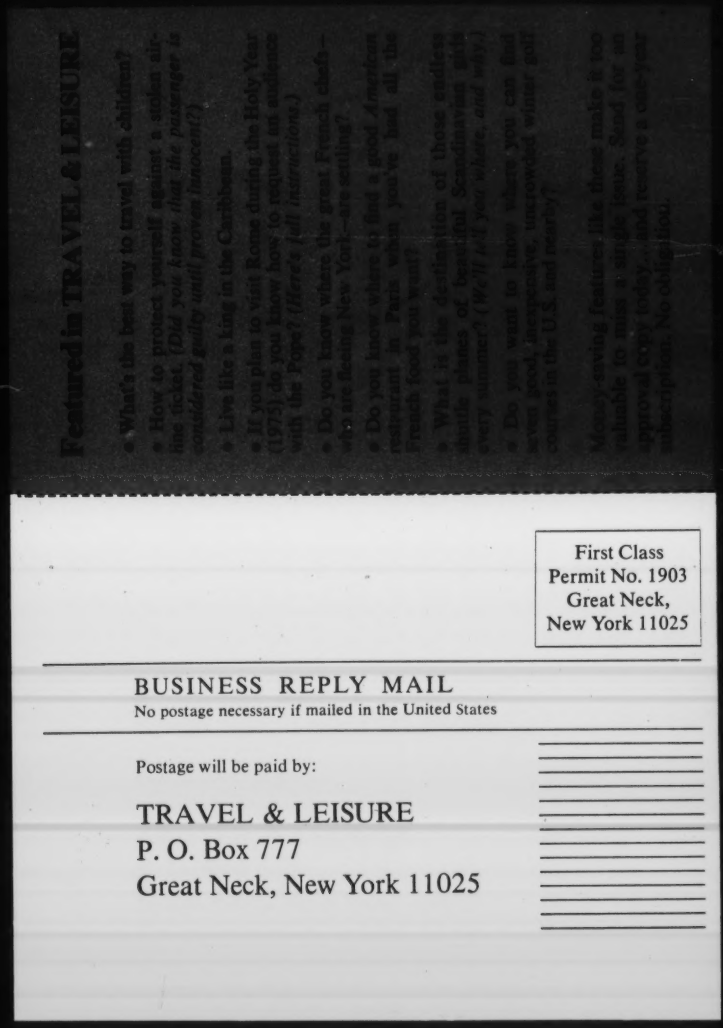

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THE LAZY B3 IN BLACK & WHITE

For the past seven years, North Carolina officials have been prosecuting three black men for setting fire to a stable. As the case swelled into a symbol of government injustice, Reddy, Parker and Grant soon became martyrs for the radical cause. Now there is new evidence, and yet another trial is in the offing

By Lawrence Wright

I. The Crime

On the night of September 24, 1968, two cars turned off Ross Avenue in Charlotte, N.C., and parked in a dark place across a broad field from the Lazy B Stables. The owner of the stables, James Medlin, was away visiting relatives with his wife, but his house was not empty. A teenaged girl who lived with the Medlins, Judy Baldwin, was inside reading. She was studying to be a nurse. She did not hear the approach of the cars. The front door was open and from her chair she could see the stables about 300 yards away, brightly lit by a pair of mercury lamps. When she heard a small dog barking, she went to the door and looked out, but she did not step outside. "I didn't see anyone," she testified at the trial. "Everything was quiet. So I got up and shut the door and went back to studying. After I closed the door and started studying, it wasn't, I know it wasn't over five minutes I heard the fire trucks go down.

"When I first saw the barn, the flames were normally high. I mean, they were just way up there high. I looked out the window and when I seen the barn I started towards the barn and the flames were going normally up high. I was running towards the barn. This guy that lived next to us, Wayne Crenshaw, came out. He heard me screaming and he ran towards me and caught me... 'cause I had a horse in the barn. And I could hear them kicking and hollering and I was going to try to save them. I did not get to the barn. It was too hot and the guy was holding me down. He was holding me down and we was watching the barn go up and the fire trucks. They came after that. And I mean I just went out completely."

The flames, feeding on 11,000 pounds of hay stored in the loft, rose over 200 feet in the sky. The owner Medlin arrived before midnight and found fire trucks and television cameras and a ring of curious neighbors encircling the immense fire of his main stable, which was not insured. "When I arrived on the scene, well I run down to the barn and my wife she got Judy and carried her to the house," Medlin testified. "And I run to the barn and the only thing that was left then was just a molding or the hulk of the barn. It was all about on the ground and just a few of the posts sticking up."

The stable burned all night and smoldered into the next day. The firemen managed to save a smaller barn outside the range of the flames which had threatened to combust in the terrific heat. When the ashes finally went cold, investigators searched the premises and found an unbroken firebomb and the glistening black carcasses of 15 horses. It was impossible to determine which of the twisted remains was the horse that had belonged to Judy Baldwin.

II. Getting the Devil – July 1972

On the afternoon of the third day of the trial, a crowd of young radical whites and movement blacks stand in the corridor of the Mecklenberg County Courthouse in Charlotte waiting to be searched before entering the courtroom. Dulled by lunch and the sultry heat, they prop against the walls, joking in whispers and enjoying the cool breath of marble on their backs. Ahead, a schoolteacher submits her purse for examination; the guard fishes around and seizes a pair of round-ended scissors of the sort children use. The teacher smiles to herself and enters the sweltering courtroom.

ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD EGIELSKI

The three defendants are not yet in their places. In the rear of the room, two black men sit by themselves, the state witnesses Walter David Washington and Theodore Alfred Hood. They have testified that they were members with the defendants of a black terrorist organization called US (United Soul), which burned down the Lazy B Stables on a September night four years past. They watch uncomfortably as the supporters of the

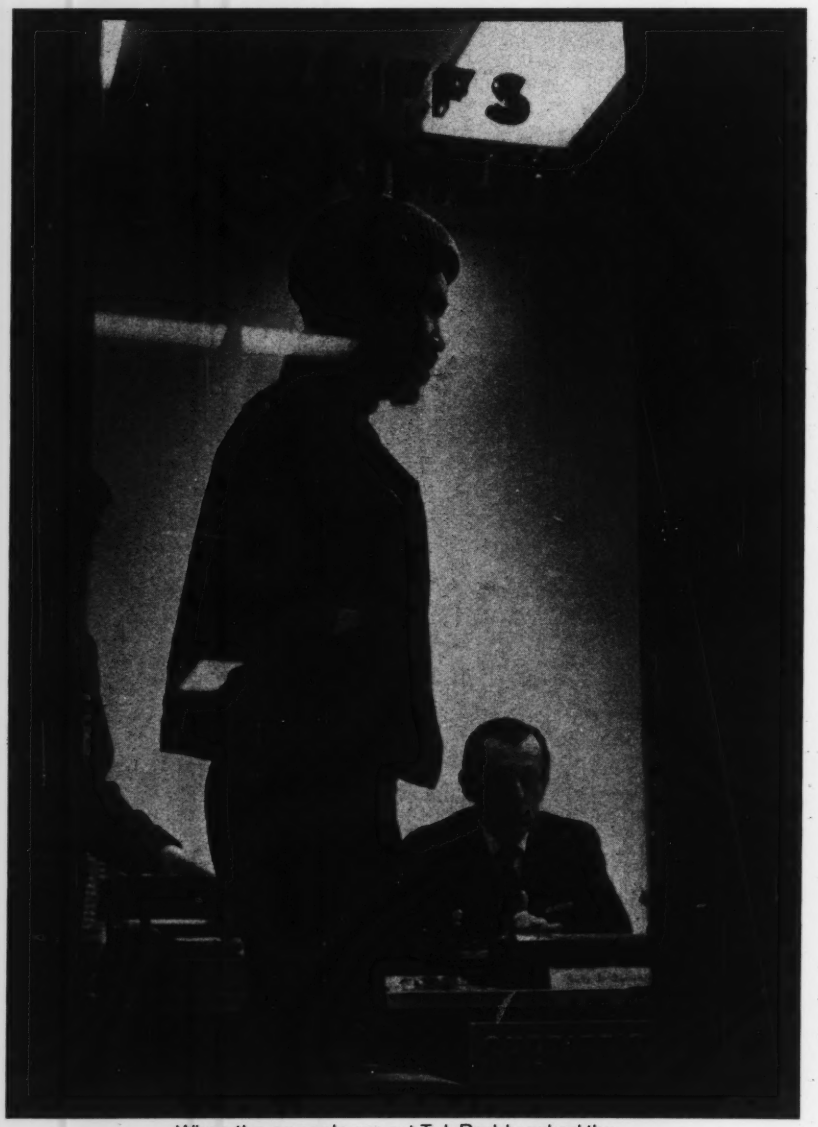
"If you want to get the devil, you have to go to hell to get the witnesses"

defendants dribble into the room and leave a wide circle of unoccupied seats around them. Hood has a record of assault, carrying a concealed weapon and auto theft. Washington, a young man with almost Oriental eyes, was discharged from the Marine Corps as a schizophrenic with homicidal tendencies after massacring a village of civilians in Vietnam and shooting at his first sergeant; a year after he returned to Charlotte from the service he was convicted of armed robbery. By testifying for the state, the two men avoided prosecution on the additional charges of illegal possession of firearms, bail jumping, felonious burning of the stable and, in Washington's case, violation of probation for the 25-year sentence he had received in the armed robbery conviction. The prosecutor is in the habit of explaining to the jury and the press, "If you want to get the devil, you have to go to hell to get the witnesses."

The defendants enter the courtroom with the splash of flashbulbs behind them. First, the poet T.J. Reddy; imposingly tall, willowy build, eyebrows peaked in a natural expression of disdain. Reddy admitted on the stand that nearly a year before the stable burned he and his white fiancée went to the stable to rent horses, but they were refused service by the owner, Medlin. Behind Reddy is Charles Parker; a short man, his round, silver-rimmed glasses intensify the bewildered look of a junkie. Washington testified he saw Parker and Reddy throw the firebombs that incinerated the stable. Finally, the prosecution's "devil," James Earl Grant, a corpulent man with a Ph.D. in chemistry from Penn State, steps into the murmuring courtroom. No emotion ever dishevels Grant's placid expression. His eyes acknowledge the presence of his many supporters, then blankly fix on the figure of Washington in the back of the room. Both men's thoughts are masked by their wooden faces.

Several months earlier Grant was convicted of aiding and abetting criminals to escape prosecution, a federal crime. The criminals he was charged with aiding were Hood and Washington, who got immunity for testifying against him. Grant got 10 years. In the current trial Hood and Washington claim that Grant was the ringleader of the group US; that he prepared the firebombs, then waited by the cars while Hood, Washington, Parker, Reddy and Clarence Harrison burned the stable. (Harrison, a young construction worker, pleaded guilty before the trial began. He will receive a suspended sentence.) The defendants strenuously deny any knowledge of the group US or any involvement in the destruction of the stable.

The principal attorney for the defense, James Ferguson II, smiles at the vacant table of the prosecution. The state's case is weaker than he imagined. After the sobbing testimony of Judy Baldwin and the routine reports of the fire investigators, the testimony of the key witnesses Hood and Washington was confusing and sometimes contradictory. Besides, the contrast between the defendants and their accusers strongly favors the defendants. Their credentials matter.



When the appeals ran out T.J. Reddy asked the Charlotte *Observer* to investigate the case, then surrendered to authorities.

A former staff writer for the Race Relations Reporter, *Wright is currently working free-lance.*

Their esteem in white society matters; a parade of distinguished professional people has attested to the refined and gentle natures of Reddy and Grant. Then, in the morning session, Ferguson administered the coup de grace: four witnesses from Penn State who testified that Grant was in Pennsylvania during the week of the burning. One of the men, a white professor of economics, produced an appointment calendar with Grant's name entered on the day of the burning. After that, Judge Frank Snepp recessed the court for lunch and called the district attorney, Tom Moore, into chambers. He warned Moore that unless the prosecution could surmount the damaging testimony of the witnesses from Penn State, the judge would consider a motion for dismissal. Defense attorney Ferguson adjusts his tie and thinks what a long lunch Moore is taking.

The jury files in and the judge assumes the bench, but the prosecution table remains empty. During the lull the audience engages in muted chatter just within Judge Snepp's slender tolerance of discord. The judge gazes irritably at the ceiling. Then, abruptly, the guard unlocks the courtroom door and Moore strides in, escorting a black woman to the prosecution table. Ferguson and the defendants confer; no one knows her.

"Laura Booton," she says on the stand, a secretary at the Mechanics and Farmers Bank in Charlotte.

The defendants look at each other and shrug. The witness testifies that in September 1968 she opened an account for a civil rights group called the Southern Students Organizing Committee.

"Is this the signature card for that new account?" asks Moore, waving the card like a flag.

"Yes it is."

It is signed by James Earl Grant and it is dated the day the Lazy B burned down.

In that moment the credibility of Grant, Reddy and Parker explodes. The shock of cold prison comes into their faces. And through the audience runs a tide of confusion.

The next day Ferguson tries to repair his case but the faces of the jury are shut to him. And to everyone's astonishment, Ferguson appears in court wearing a boldly printed tie with horses on it.

III. John Mitchell's Horrors

After the trial Grant, Reddy and Parker were transmogrified into the "Charlotte Three" or the "Lazy B 3" and entered that category of celebrity known as Political Prisoners. Angela Davis spoke in Charlotte to raise money for their defense. Random House published a volume of T.J. Reddy's poetry. Over cocktails in the rich homes of the Myers Park area, contributors to the cause speculated that Clarence Harrison, the fourth defendant, copped a plea and that the bank card was a forgery. Many people in Charlotte feared that even if the men were guilty they were prosecuted by the government for plainly political reasons and convicted on inadequate evidence in a hostile environment. The extreme sentences the men received reinforced this view: Reddy got 20 years for burning the stable, Parker got 10 and Grant received an extraordinary 25-year sentence which was the stiffest sentence in at least 10 years for a single instance of arson or unlawful burning, including crimes in which people were killed or property damage approaching $1 million was sustained. Judge Snepp explained his sentences by calling the crime "one of the most inhuman I've ever heard of," but the supporters of the defendants believed that the judge was biased by their appearance and their daily picketing of the trial outside the courthouse. The prosecutors, on the other hand, suspected that the judge was angered by the likelihood that the defense had been fabricated. The Charlotte *Observer* called the sentences "out of line with sentences imposed in other unlawful burning cases in North Carolina in recent years," and wondered: "Are those 15 horses worth 25, 20 and 10 years of three men's lives?" A university professor in Charlotte felt strongly enough about the apparent injustice that he mortgaged his home to provide bond for the men while they were on appeal. But the appeals ran out after a year and a half, and on a bleak day in January 1974 the last of the three men entered prison.

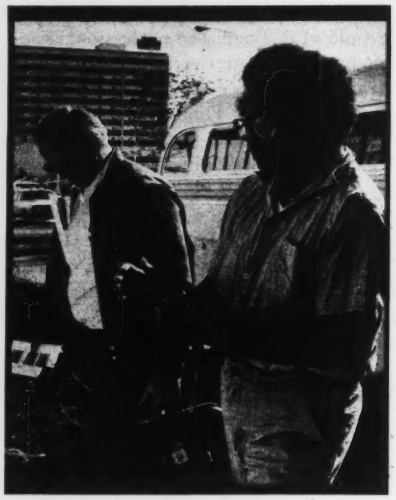
After the trial, Grant, Reddy and Parker entered that category of celebrity known as Political Prisoners

Then suddenly, the controversy flared anew. Just before he surrendered to prison authorities in January, T.J. Reddy went to the Charlotte *Observer*, where he had once worked as a reporter, and asked an editor there to look into the case. The editor was so impressed by Reddy's plea that he assigned two of his best reporters to investigate the story. After eight weeks the two reporters, Mark Ethridge III and Michael Schwartz, uncovered a secret government deal with Hood and Washington which had been approved by Robert Mardian, John Mitchell's assistant attorney general who was later implicated in the Watergate conspiracy. The *Observer* found that after the state case concluded, the federal government paid the witnesses rewards and relocation expenses and provided them and their families with tickets to Mexico. By that time it was known that there were new warrants for Washington's arrest on other charges, unrelated to the stable fire, which appeared to make the agents of the federal government culpable of aiding and abetting Washington to escape prosecution—the same crime for which the government earlier had prosecuted Grant. "Exactly how much 'reward' and 'relocation' money was paid to Hood and Washington is unclear," the *Observer* reported on March 24. A Justice Department source found records of payments of $4,000 to each man, "but an attorney involved in the negotiations between federal authorities and Hood and Washington insists they each received payments totaling about $15,000.

"And three North Carolina law enforcement officers closely acquainted with Washington," the *Observer* continued, "say that in the past year Washington has bragged to them that he received additional money. He gave each officer a different figure, ranging from $38,000 to $70,000. The officers all say they are inclined to believe him."

Although the *Observer* could not independently establish the guilt or innocence of the Lazy B 3, the paper urged a new trial or, in lieu of that, commutation of the sentences by the governor. Under a deluge of letters from all over the nation on behalf of the defendants, Governor James Holshouser directed the state parole board to determine whether the sentences given the men were just. The board's opinion was that the men should be given a new trial outside of Charlotte, and that the governor should withhold his power to commute all or part of the sentences because "the stigma of conviction would still be there." Finally, in December 1974, Judge Sam Ervin III—son of the former North Carolina senator—heard a motion for a new trial.

The bus bearing Grant from the federal penitentiary in Atlanta was late and Judge Ervin began the hearing without him. The first exhibit attorney Ferguson brought into evidence at the



Accompanied by lawyer Ferguson (center), Reddy and Parker (right) are escorted to jail; right, Grant arrives at Dec. 1974 hearing.

hearing was a confidential report from a Treasury agent to his superior which contained three shocking disclosures. First, when the government began to negotiate with Washington for his testimony he was already the prime suspect in five murders in the Charlotte area (he was never charged in any of them). Second, Joseph "Popcorn" Goines, Grant's former roommate, was an FBI informer. Finally, the FBI tried to block prosecution of Grant on the federal charges because the agency wanted to make Grant an informer as well. The motive for this last may have been Grant's membership in an old-line communist labor organization called the Southern Conference Education Fund. The clear implication was that the government eventually did prosecute Grant because he refused to be blackmailed into informing on a political organization.

When Grant finally arrived at the hearing his supporters were stunned and outraged. His face still bore that monkish serenity and yet he was in chains, shackled hand and foot. The callous and vindictive use of government power had never seemed more perfectly expressed.

As the hearing progressed, government authorities testified that they provided protective custody for nine months to Hood and Washington before the Lazy B trial; four agents were assigned to guard the men until both the federal and state trials concluded, at which time Hood and Washington were given the means to leave the country. All this cost the government about $35,000 by its own reckoning, and it was done because Hood and Washington said they were afraid of being murdered by Grant.

The reprehensible conduct of the government and the obvious echoes of Watergate boosted the case into national prominence. The New York *Times* editorialized: "The 'horrors' of the Nixon administration were hardly confined to the White House, as former attorney general John N. Mitchell would have had everyone believe. One of the 'Justice Department Horrors' of Mitchell's law-and-order years is gradually coming to light in a North Carolina courtroom." Tom Wicker gave voice to the arch moral posture of the defendants and their supporters in a column which began: "Another year, another Christmas, has passed and T.J. Reddy, James Grant and Charles Parker are still in prison. . . ."

"The case of the Charlotte Three has become something of a cause for those who know about it," Wicker continued. "They believe it to be one of those vengeful miscarriages of justice by which comfortable society attempted to label urban unrest, racial disorders, campus disturbances, and anti-war activities as the work of agitators and terrorists, rather than the results of economic and political injustices."

IV. The Hit—January 1973

Six months after he testified in the Lazy B trial, Walter David Washington was back in Charlotte, sporting a leather cowboy hat from Guadalajara and sprinkling his patter with phrase-book Spanish. He was at the house of a friend, Richard Latimer, with a couple of Latimer's girlfriends, when the telephone rang. It was a woman Washington knew slightly. She suggested they meet that night in Clanton Park.

At about 11:00 Washington got out of Latimer's car in Clanton Park and told him to wait a moment in case the woman didn't show. He walked to the corner and stood under a streetlight near Ross Avenue, a few blocks from where the Lazy B once stood. Soon he saw a black Cadillac turn off Ross and cruise slowly toward him, the electric window on the passenger's side sliding down as it slowed to a stop. Washington bent down and looked in. But it was just some dude.

"Say, man," said the dude, "you know where is the girls in this town?"

Washington could not reply. He was shot three times in the chest.

Latimer heard the shots and pulled up to find Washington lying on the sidewalk bleeding heavily. Latimer panicked. He was in enough trouble already.

Five months earlier, right after the Lazy B trial, the word had gone out on the street that there was a contract on Theodore Alfred Hood. Latimer had gone along to back up Hood, and sure enough this junkie named Earl Mackey came walking up the street with a towel wrapped around a gun. When Mackey saw Hood, he pointed the towel at him. So they blew Mackey away. It was self-defense, but later Latimer and Hood were charged with murder.

So now, Latimer and his two girlfriends got Washington into the car and then Latimer thought about how the man who has the contract always finishes the job, like on TV, when they come in the hospital looking like a doctor and all . . . . So he drove clear to Rockhill, across the state line into South Carolina. He made the trip in about 20 minutes and when they rolled the body into the emergency room, the doctor took one look and whispered "Je-sus" because Washington was shot twice in the heart and once in the lung and yet he was still alive. Latimer told police he just found

Washington "staggering along the highway" outside Rockhill.

Later, Washington claimed he was shot by a stranger in a black Cadillac in the Clanton Park section of Charlotte. He believed that James Earl Grant had put out a contract on him. The next day, however, the Charlotte *Observer* quoted an unnamed "black professional" who said that Washington had been shot for giving information in an armed robbery case in Iredell County. Washington was shaken. He had never given such information. He didn't even know where Iredell County was. He lay in the hospital bed and stared at the ceiling tiles. He figured whatever was coming down, the authorities were in on it. Like they were always in on it. Like they were in on the group US.

V. The cause célèbre

As the Lazy B 3 case swelled into a symbol of government injustice, the issue

The *Observer* editor was so impressed by Reddy's plea that he assigned two of his best reporters to investigate the story

of the guilt of the men diminished, although no other satisfactory theory ever arose to explain how the stable burned. The uncommon credentials of the defendants captivated the press, which seemed to believe not so much that the men were innocent as that they were too respectable to be in prison. Then, too, the trial of the Lazy B 3 came at a time when not only was the federal government prosecuting black militants across the country, but also the state of North Carolina had cast a net of criminal charges which trapped up many of the most important black leaders of the state. Clearly, a systematic political purge was under way and there were no finer candidates for martyrdom than Grant, Reddy and Parker.

Walter David Washington, on the other hand, became a sort of newsroom legend; a man of monstrous evil who got away with murder again and again, meanwhile eluding his own death in a preternatural fashion. A year after Washington was gunned down in Clanton Park, he was shot again, twice in the stomach during a quarrel in Charlotte. On that occasion, he drove himself to Mercy Hospital in Charlotte and checked in under his own power. The *Observer* would not talk to Washington because the editors felt, on the basis of his psychological record and his reputation for homicide, that he might kill their star reporters, Ethridge and Schwartz, who had been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for the investigation of the government deal.

Washington claims that the Charlotte police floated the story about Iredell County after he was shot because they wanted to see him dead. A check with the district attorney for Iredell County, who directed that a search be made of his files and who made private inquiries to police investigators, uncovered no evidence that Washington ever gave any information about anything in Iredell County. The "black professional" who fed the story to the *Observer* turned out to be Washington's former probation officer, who was once a Charlotte cop (he now denies that he was the source of the story). The Charlotte police want him dead, Washington says, because one of the Lazy B 3 was a police informer, whom the police could not save once Washington gave his story to federal agents. One Charlotte policeman admitted that the department had informers close to the US group, but he would not disclose who they were.

For years the true story of what happened the night the Lazy B burned down remained buried in South Side, a black community in Charlotte, which to the white press is an unfathomable black pool with a sheen of suspicion and evasion. No one knew this better than Reddy, who cynically guessed the blind spots of his former employer when he asked the *Observer* to investigate.

However, a *New Times* investigation has uncovered two new witnesses who have personal knowledge of the involvement of Grant, Reddy and Parker in the group US. The new witnesses, and other possible witnesses who refused to be interviewed about US, expressed fear that their names might be exposed. They will not testify in the event of a new trial because, like Clarence Harrison, who refused the opportunity to become a state witness when he pleaded guilty to the burning, they are afraid of reprisals from the defendants. One of the new witnesses, who here is called Brother X, helped Grant, Reddy and Parker burn down the Lazy B Stables.

Judge Sam Ervin III has not yet ruled whether the Lazy B 3 will be given a

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new trial. Speculation among reporters has been that if the convictions of the three men are overturned, the case will be dropped because only the discredited Hood and Washington have ever connected Grant, Reddy and Parker to the burning of the stable—or to the group US. Since Grant was recently paroled from federal charges, the Lazy B 3 may soon be free.

What follows is a reconstruction of the crime, based on court records and interviews with Brother X.

VI. The Confessions of Brother X

Shortly after 7:00 on September 24, 1968, James Earl Grant called to order a regular meeting of the group US. At first these meetings on Tuesday and Thursday nights had been full of boastful chatter about revolution. Grant might quote the sayings of Chairman Mao from the Little Red Book or T. J. Reddy might read his poetry while everyone got high. "Then on Saturdays everybody go out Gold Mine Road with our armory and eliminate bottles and shit like that."

For all their talk, there was only one true revolutionary in the group: Grant himself. "We all look up to Grant because everybody know he's heavy in the head," says Brother X. Indeed. Grant had arrived in Charlotte less than a year before, but already he had insinuated himself into every major black or radical group in the state; he had formed new groups as well, with money enlisted from churches and government agencies. The purpose of it all was to create a storm of black political movement—the Black People's Political Union—and the eye of the storm would be Grant. The group US was his military arm—and here they were before him: bitter veterans of Vietnam, drug addicts, some of them dangerously unstable, all of them susceptible to Grant's revolutionary vision.

When T. J. Reddy stood up, everybody knew what he was going to say. He looked around at the other members—they were dressed in black and ready to go—and he said, "Brother Grant, I make a motion that we paint the barn tonight." Charles Parker, Reddy's sidekick, seconded the motion to "paint the barn." The men spoke in code because they imagined that their meeting place might be bugged. They did not guess that even then there were informers in the group.

The motion was more or less a formality. Everyone knew of Reddy's humiliation at the stables by the owner Medlin, and the operation had been discussed many times before. "We figure if the man done like T.J. say, then shit, he deserves what's coming." Reddy, who had reconnoitered the area, drew a map of the Lazy B Stables, pointing out the high-intensity lights around the barn and the broad field between the buildings and the woods. Since it was a matter of revenge, Reddy and Parker would be the ones to burn the stable. Washington, who was considered the director of military operations, stationed Theodore Alfred Hood, Clarence Harrison, Brother X and one other man along the "perimeter" at the edge of the field.

Grant emerged from the bathroom with a mixture of paint thinner and wax flakes, which Reddy, Parker and Harrison poured into empty quart bottles of Colt 45 Malt Liquor. Harrison accidentally spilled some on the floor. This was his first operation. Everyone knew Harrison was shaky, but Grant insisted on testing him. He handed Harrison an automatic weapon. The others loaded their weapons and a can of gas into Grant's white Mercury convertible and Reddy's little green Falcon. They drove down Ross Avenue

"I make a motion that we paint the barn tonight"

behind a row of apartments, and backed their cars to the edge of the woods.

It was quiet. The lights around the stable cast a purple glow in the sky. Inside the owner's house, Judy Baldwin was quietly studying. The revolutionaries hung back, eying the glare of the lights. Finally Washington crouched down and darted into the path and everyone fell in behind him, except for Grant, who stayed at the cars because he was too fat to run. They flew through the woods as if the barn were already burning and the horses already screaming behind them, but it was still dead quiet and the horses were asleep. When they approached the border of the field, the men fanned out behind trees, except for Harrison, who held the exposed position in the middle of the path. On signal, Reddy and Parker spurted across the field, carrying the firebombs and the gas can and throwing giant shadows into the trees. All at once a dog began to bark and the quiet shattered like glass. Everybody froze. The men with guns trained their weapons on the house in case anyone appeared. But Judy Baldwin did not step outside.

Reddy and Parker poured gas around the stable at the base of the stalls. The horses stirred and their nostrils flared at the harsh smell of gasoline. Parker stepped back, lit the wick of his firebomb and hurled it against the wall. It broke and flared into a small fire. Reddy threw his bottle but it did not break. Then Parker picked up Reddy's bomb and threw it again, but still it did not break. Now the flames rustled in the dry hay. When the horses recognized fire they began to kick the stable walls and scream.

From the woods Harrison saw the flames. Suddenly he turned and ran down the path, away from the cries of the animals. He ran blindly into the woods, holding his automatic weapon in front of his face to block the slapping branches. Washington saw him bolt and ran after. Catching him easily in several strides, Washington jerked him to the ground and stuck his gun under Harrison's chin. But he couldn't risk a shot. He ordered Harrison back in formation.

Reddy and Parker were back in the trees with the others. They stood a moment and listened to the wind in the fire. Reddy said, "Let's go," and the men fell in line and headed back toward the cars. Only this time they marched. They marched deliberately through the woods as the horses shrieked, and when they emerged Grant smiled and pointed behind them. They turned and saw the fire through the trees. They could smell the flesh of burning horses. Suddenly they heard a whoosh as the fire caught the hay in the loft and leapt clear over the trees. "Damn, that's pretty," said Grant. "Look at that motherfucker burn."

VII. Final Thoughts of Brother X

I remember when Brother Grant started going crazy. We got into some heavy shit after the Lazy B — firebombing grocery stores, the Wallace campaign headquarters, the office of a housing project, a lot of stuff folks don't know nothing about — then Grant grow this grand idea to put like dynamite bombs in department stores and banks; blowing up *people*, man.

Then you talk about my man, Washington. He be trying to paint himself like the little mouse in the back of the church . . . shiiit, he was the baddest motherfucker in the group. He give this jive about *informers* in the group and all, when the only informer I ever know is Washington. He sold us out back in 1969 when he got arrested for armed robbery. Don't nobody get probation for a sentence of 25 years!

Too bad about T.J. and C.P., but what we be doing was some bad business.

I guess the truth got to come out sometime. ●

Movies

Easy living

By Frank Rich

I have always been crazy about going to movies in the summer, and if there's any tragedy that comes with my present job, it's that that pleasure is no longer as accessible as it once was. Critics must see all the summer movies at once—during an approximately three-week period in late spring—and, when summer finally hits, I pick up the paper and discover that I've already seen everything in town. That leaves me with no choice but to engage in all those other seasonal activities (picnics, cookouts, sunbathing, whatever) that have perennially struck me as being poor alternatives to spending bright and fetid July afternoons in the well-cooled dark. For those more fortunate than I am, the summer of 1975 should satisfy even the most ravenous cinematic appetites—especially if you find (as I do) that your tolerance for junk (whether junk food, junk fiction or junk movies) rises with the thermometer. What follows is a rundown of the latest and largest batch of summer releases (there are more yet to come), all of which are at least tolerable—though, in some cases, it will help if you're mildly high on Solarcaine upon entering the theater.

Nothing short of an invasion of body snatchers is going to keep audiences away from **Jaws**, the smash film version of Peter Benchley's popular novel about a shark who terrorizes a New England summer resort. Here at last is a suspense movie that delivers the goods, and delivers them without resorting to the idiotic all-star theatrics of the disaster films or the crypto-religiosity of *The Exorcist*. *Jaws* is just what it is supposed to be, a fish-bites-man story, and it is happily lacking in subplots, sexual interludes and anything that might be mistaken for an intellectual subtext. Director Steven Spielberg (working from a script by Benchley and Carl Gottlieb) intends only to scare the crap out of you, and he's so successful at that basic task that *Jaws* may soon force prune juice to go the way of Cod Liver Oil.

The movie divides rather neatly (rather too neatly) into two halves: during the first we watch the disbelieving summer vacationers of Amity (read Martha's Vineyard) stand idly by as the villainous man-eater cavalierly dismantles the limbs of an eclectic assortment of frolicking bathers; during the second, three unlikely shipmates—the local police chief (Roy Scheider), a hip young ichthyologist (Richard Dreyfuss) and a craggy old Yankee fisherman (Robert Shaw)—set out to battle the shark to the death. (Rest assured that the world will be made safe for American tourism.) Unfortunately, there is a breakdown of logic in each of the two acts. For the first hour, we are forced to believe that Amity's mayor (Murray Hamilton—who else?), anxious not to lose any summer dollars, would insist on keeping the beach open after the first fatality—and that the townsfolk would support his obstinate, death-dealing stand; later on, we have to buy the fact that the three harpooners would set off after the beast in a flimsy craft without benefit of backup air or sea support. It is to your benefit, as well as the movie's, to put such niggling matters aside; assuming you do so, *Jaws* will be smooth sailing—however bloody the waters along the way.

Panic at the seashore in Spielberg's *Jaws*: delivering the goods.

As he demonstrated in his previous outing, *The Sugarland Express*, Spielberg is blessed with a talent that is absurdly absent from most American filmmakers these days: this man actually knows how to tell a story on screen. In *Jaws* he never holds a sequence too long, uses brief dialogue snatches (rather than talky expository scenes) to bridge together the plot, and films the aquatic battles with exuberance and precision (whether he's shooting above, at or below sea level). It speaks well of this director's gifts that some of the most frightening sequences in *Jaws* are those where we don't even see the shark: Spielberg can often afford to let camera movements, water patterns and surface manifestations of the predator's presence (e.g., floating barrels or wood debris that have become fastened to the fish's head) do the job. Soon we're scared so silly that the casual splashing of joyful children or the bobbing of a female swimmer's bathing cap can push us over the edge, into shrieking, horror-movie pandemonium. My only reservation about Spielberg's work is that his movies lack a wider aesthetic or personal framework that might take us beyond the story; the well-executed terror of *Jaws* is not strikingly original in any visual or psychological sense, and, unlike a *Psycho* or a *Vertigo*, this movie is a poor bet to induce thrills on repeated viewings. Of course, some audiences will go back to it over and over again anyway, but that's because a substantial

sector of the moviegoing public now enjoys reliving great moments of screen gore in the same way audiences used to like returning to movies for a favorite performance or musical number.

There is, to be sure, a lot of blood floating around this film, but the movie is classy enough to keep you from feeling cheapened for having eaten it all up. Though portraying highly theatrical types, Spielberg's cast doesn't go haywire (Dreyfuss' vaguely self-mocking laugh continues to be the most infectious in the business), and *Jaws* is also the first Universal film in about two years that doesn't look musty and canned; this director has triumphed where Billy Wilder (*The Front Page*) and George Roy Hill (*The Sting, The Great Waldo Pepper*) have failed by managing to present his picture in real, vibrant Technicolor rather than washed-out shades of brown. Nor has Spielberg neglected to throw in some smidgens of wit (including a cameo by author Benchley), a slight undercurrent of sentimentality (for the days of the great old independent fishermen) and several gorgeous sunsets over the brooding sea. No matter how you slice it, *Jaws* is pure gold; this movie is going to bring so many people into movie theaters and, concurrently, scare so many people away from the seashore that I wouldn't be surprised if it caused a major redistribution of this country's leisure-industry wealth.

The disturbing essence of **Night Moves**, Arthur Penn's first film since *Little Big Man* in 1971, creeps up quite quietly in one of the film's most subdued passages. The setting is a dilapidated, sea-scarred cottage on some Godforsaken inlet in the Florida Keys, where Harry Moseby (Gene Hackman), a private eye miles away from his L.A. home, is trying to get to the bottom of a case which has no bottom. It is night, and he finds himself with Paula (Jennifer Warren), a mysterious lady who may or may not know some valuable information. Harry and Paula are verbally and sexually circling each other, making (in the parlance of Alan Sharp's screenplay) "night moves"—gestures that are analogous to the "knight moves" the two have made in a chess game they've recently completed. Suddenly Paula, a tall, sandy-haired beauty whose age and past are equally indeterminate, asks Harry, "Where were you when Kennedy got shot?" The question rises without warning in the muggy air, but Harry snaps back reflexively: "Which Kennedy?" "Any Kennedy," says Paula. She has asked the question, she explains, because "it's one of those questions somebody always knows the answer to." So Harry answers for both assassinations: when JFK was shot, he says, he was at the tail end of his pro-football career; when RFK was shot, he was working on a divorce case and wishing he were doing something else. Paula listens and then, after a while, answers herself. "I remember when Bobby got shot," she says. "The newsreels made it look like it was taking place under water."

Unbearable regret, failed expectations, ever-fading memories: this is the stuff that *Night Moves* is made of, and there's no mistaking Penn's concerns for those of any other American filmmaker. At the same time, the director's characteristic view of the world has undergone a traumatic transformation. While in the '60s Penn could always find heroic figures who carved lives of meaning out of the arid societal dust bowls around them, now he sees no such small victories. (Asked at one point who's losing a football game he is watching on TV, Harry replies, "One side is losing faster than the other.") The pessimism of *Alice's Restaurant* and *Little Big Man*—Penn movies that spoke respectively of the demise of a peaceful commune and of the extinction of what an Indian chief hero called "human beings"—has begun to swallow up the director himself. In *Night Moves'* present-day world, the characters have no opportunities for heroism; they can't even remember what it is they are struggling against. In the place of the old angers is a dark numbness, a feeling that whatever went wrong some years ago is now vague and meaningless, buried forever "under water." When Harry and Paula talk about the Kennedy assassinations, they speak not in sorrow or anger, but in the muddled tones of people who are thrashing about, trying to find some emotional touchstone (even if it's death) that might make them feel alive again.

At times *Night Moves* seems so expressive of its director's own artistic difficulties that it's almost too much to bear. Like his detective hero, Penn seems lost in this film: his movie has moments of emotional intensity and cinematic pizzazz, but, more often, it flounders around, searching for a shape and an identity that never present themselves. It was probably a mistake for Penn to choose this project in the first place—between *The Long Goodbye* and *Chinatown*, we've had our fill of latter-day Philip Marlowes during the past two years—and Sharp's script is further compromised by its technical sloppiness; during the last half hour we don't care who committed the pivotal murder, and, once we find out, the villain's motive is far from clear. Worse still, Sharp has gone overboard in paying homage to novelist Ross MacDonald, and every time he gives us Lew Archer-esque clues involving obscure familial relationships, buried treasure, broken marriages and lost fathers (both Harry and the murder victim have one), he only reminds us how paltry his own plotting is when stacked up against a proven master of the form.

In almost any other director's hands, *Night Moves* would be a disaster; in Penn's, it's the most interesting failure of the year. While the film would be better if its story functioned properly—if the various fragments gradually

Hackman and Warren in Penn's *Night Moves*: failed expectations.

crystallized into the coherent pattern they're clearly meant to form—Penn sometimes moves us anyway, in flamboyant defiance of the narrative that imprisons him. In one fabulous sequence, Harry looks for clues to a Hollywood back-lot murder by watching a movie's rushes and then a film student's 16-mm documentary footage of the same action: the contrast between the two visions of a single reality reminds us of the space that separates a B-movie shoot-'em-up from the Zapruder film. Penn's use of water imagery pays off intermittently, and the picture's violent climax stirringly fuses some wonderful Hitchcock schtick from *North by Northwest* and *Foreign Correspondent*.While star Hackman (who first came to prominence in Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde*) is somewhat hobbled by the sketchiness of the script, his private eye is not a retread of any of those that have preceded him in Hollywood films; Harry is special—humorful and warm and desperate to keep his passions in check. Femme fatale Jennifer Warren, with her edgy, disembodied voice and avant-garde good looks, strikes me as being a real find, and so does Melanie Griffith as Delly, a sex-crazed, 16-year-old Beverly Hills runaway who "likes things to change, no matter what." For all her bratty selfishness, Delly is the ultimate heir to the vanquished flower children of *Alice's Restaurant*. That Penn has compassion for her (which he does—he can't hide it) proves that one of the richest sensibilities in our movies is still intact; it is this world we're stuck in—a world which makes Penn's depth of feeling look so incongruous—that may be out of joint.

Blake Edwards, who is one of our snazziest purveyors of slapstick comedy (*What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?, The Great Race*) and light romance (*Darling Lili, Breakfast at Tiffany's*), returns to the scene of an earlier triumph in **The Return of the Pink Panther**—forsaking, hopefully forever, the sudsy melodramatics of his very sad 1974 clinker, *The Tamarind Seed*. *Return* looks more like a warm-up picture than a real movie—an attempt to get the muscles back in tone by going through the paces of some familiar exercises. The movie is poky and uneven at best (there are about eight good laughs), and what I like most about it is its inherent promise that fresh and top-notch Blake Edwards films are likely to follow in its wake.

As was the case with *The Pink Panther* and *A Shot in the Dark*, the director builds this film around Peter Sellers' impersonation of an all-thumbs French detective named Inspector Clouseau who here again is called upon to retrieve an obscenely large diamond that has been pilfered, *Topkapi*-style, from the shrine of a mythical mid-Asian/North African country called Lugash. Sellers is not a comic genius and never was one, but Clouseau remains his most comfortable and successful film role. The key to the character is not to play him as a schlepp (as Alan Arkin did, with disastrous results, in Bud Yorkin's 1968 spin-off, *Inspector Clouseau*); Sellers gets his laughs by projecting a ludicrous and indestructible sense of self-satisfaction. Clouseau takes himself seriously no matter what—even when he turns a room into shambles through clumsiness, even when he's confronted by a doorbell that won't stop ringing, a bird with loose bowels or an endless procession of characters who can't decipher his peculiar brand of fractured Franglais. Edwards' screenplay (co-written with Frank Waldman) is primarily an excuse to bring on such gags, and he pads it out with decent character turns by Christopher Plummer (as a retired cat burglar), Herbert Lom (as Clouseau's neurotic, and ultimately psychotic, boss) and Victor Spinetti (as a Franklin Pangborn-style hotel clerk). Richard Williams has produced the obligatory but still dazzling animated credit sequence (all set to Henry Mancini's immortal, if tuneless, theme music), and the lovely settings include Nice and Gstaad—two of the few places in the world whose beauty can withstand even Clouseau's calamitous shenanigans.

From a patch of 1904 history, filmmaker John Milius has fashioned an adventure drama which takes the archaic genre cliches we associate with the old-time potboilers of Rudolph Valentino and Errol Flynn and manages to make them work all over again. **The Wind and the Lion** (an unfortunate turn-off title) is unabashedly what it is—honest-to-God entertainment composed of equal parts of intrigue, derring-do, sentiment, bloody spectacle and foolishness—and, as such, it needs no apologies.

Milius both wrote and directed the film, and he has placed at its center just the sort of man a picture like this one must have—Raisuli (Sean Connery), a mysterious and dashing figure who is the spiritual and political leader of the insurgent Berbers in turn-of-the-century Morocco. Raisuli wants to undermine the power of his nation's ruling Sultan, a despot much beholden to the interests of the West's imperialistic Great Powers, and so, in the movie's opening sequence, he and his outlaw followers abduct a wealthy American widow (Candice Bergen) from her villa in Tangier. What ensues is an international power struggle that rocks the internal politics of both Morocco and Teddy Roosevelt's America—a battle of determined personalities and national wills that threatens to send the entire world crashing into war. Meanwhile, out on the North African desert, a warm but platonic romance blossoms between Raisuli (who proves, conveniently enough, to be a self-made philosopher as well as an expert saber-rattler) and the independent-minded, almost Jamesian American woman who is his prisoner.

The Wind and the Lion covers a lot of meaty territory—cultural conflicts, dollar diplomacy, guerrilla warfare—and, if the material is examined closely, it even has some bearing on the wars of national liberation, U.S. foreign policy adventures and terrorist incidents that have become staples of our present-day news diet. Although Milius has written his script to suggest such then-and-now connections (and has also thrown in an excess of windy speeches that explain the metaphorical uses of the word "wind" in the film's title), you can ignore all that stuff if you so choose. The movie works because of its crackerjack story and the effective manner in which Milius tells it. Nothing in this filmmaker's previous directorial outing, *Dillinger*, suggested that he might be capable of the bold cinematic design that gives *The Wind and the Lion* its almost irresistible appeal: the movie's action scenes are shot from such an intimate perspective and edited with so sure and driving a hand that they have not only a utilitarian ferocity but a provocatively abstract beauty.

Connery is delightful—he seems to be having more fun than he's had since the earliest Bond films—and Bergen is far more interesting here than she has been at any time since *Carnal Knowledge*. Even John Huston, as Secretary of State John Hay, is in control—a minor miracle, but a miracle nonetheless. Of all the performances, though, the real show stopper may be Brian Keith's impersonation of T.R.; he manages to capture the Rough Rider's macho fixations without destroying his

intelligence or turning him into a blustery, caricatured asshole. Thanks to him, Connery and the film's construction, a complex and compelling love-hate relationship develops between Roosevelt and Raisuli—even though the two men are adversaries and, of course, never have a scene together. Milius has also managed to work in a winning replay of the amusing friendship he created between Paul Newman and a dancing grizzly bear in his screenplay for Huston's *Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*—only now the Judge has evolved into the American President and, as befits *The Wind and the Lion*'s post-frontier time frame, the bear T.R. plays with is a specimen he has shot and had stuffed.

Into every life a little nonsense must fall, and if some has to fall your way, it might as well be **Jacqueline Susann's Once Is Not Enough.** I have not read the best-selling novel from which this enterprise has been adapted, but since Irving Mansfield, the late author's husband, is billed as the film's executive producer and has even consented to have his wife's name be used in the picture's title, I assume this gaudy and irrationally entertaining pulp drama is a suitable memorial to Susann's spirit. The plot has to do with the daughter (Deborah Raffin) of a has-been film producer (Kirk Douglas) who learns the hard way that she had best get over her infatuation with Daddy and give way to one of the various suitors who are knock-knock-knocking at her door. Among those suitors are a dashing playboy (George Hamilton!) and a hard-drinking, Pulitzer-Prize winning author (David Janssen). Since Susann was contemptuous of writers who made less money and got better reviews than she did, it's not surprising that she would saddle her fictionalized macho author, who looks and talks like Norman Mailer, with an all too ironic case of impotency. But then again, all the men in this film either have had, or are in imminent danger of having, their balls cut off.

Once Is Not Enough is hugely funny—in part because the material is so earnestly dumb, in part because the actors refuse to take it seriously. Alexis Smith, as the "fifth richest woman in the world," and Melina Mercouri, as an actress who is "a bigger recluse than Garbo or Howard Hughes," have a lot of fun with the film's semi-steamy lesbian love scene, and Gary Conway has a grand time as an alienated ex-astronaut who spends most of the film trying to find himself by jogging along deserted beaches. Brenda Vaccaro, whose broad comic style would never work in a legitimate movie, makes "the youngest female magazine editor in New York" the most vulgar as well; while the character she plays (the editor of a magazine called *Gloss*—love it?) can't read or write worth beans, she's a self-described "great lay" and is apparently intended as Susann's devastating put-down of any nascent feminists in her audience.

If the actors and story of *Once Is Not Enough* are not enough for you, the filmmakers have additionally seen fit to pack the screen and soundtrack with so many commercial plugs that there are times when one feels Susann might have been an unwitting proponent of socialist realism. Gucci, Bloomingdale's, El Morocco's, P.J. Clarke's, and the Beverly Hills, Pierre and Waldorf Astoria hotels all get the nod, as does the latest book by Rex Reed, who was and is Susann's principal literary cheerleader. The movie has been directed by Guy Green, a man whose film version of John Fowles' *The Magus* occupies a hallowed place in the hearts of bad movie connoisseurs everywhere, and whose last effort, *Luther,* made the Reformation forever synonymous with torture for those American Film Theater subscribers who had to sit through it. Green brings to Susann's work a mix of superficiality and inanity that is too instinctive to possibly be fake. It is the innocence of the movie's mediocrity that makes it tick, and, in the grand tradition of Susann herself, Green works tirelessly at stripping the tinsel and glamour away from his high-living protagonists so that we can get to the real tinsel underneath.

Books

Modern time, mon

By Geoffrey Wolff

Far Tortuga *by Peter Matthiessen.* Random House (408 pp., $10.95).

A couple of weeks ago I flew from Vermont, where snow could still be seen on the mountains in mid-May, to Puerto Rico, where I joined the crew of a 45-foot sloop sailing north from Grenada to Annapolis. *Ándale* is big for her length, beamy, with high freeboard and a deep keel, 29 tons net. She's in the charter trade, winter in the Grenadines and summer in the Chesapeake. For her owner as for her charter captain, time is money, and too much time had been spent on the passage up to San Juan. An oil line had ruptured near Antigua, and the huge Perkins diesel engine had had to be pulled and overhauled. Then the compressors for both electric refrigeration units had burned up, and she wasn't quite in fit sailing trim, and the crew had been fretting and in close company for a month of minor troubles, and when I came aboard everyone was tired, and thinking hard about other ways to make a living.

Zack was the captain and navigator, a farmer from South Carolina who periodically returns to the land but who has made his way at sea since he was a kid. He's been out in all weathers, and his face at 43 is deeply lined, and his eyes squint even after sundown. His old friend, and longtime foredeckman, cook and associate helmsman, is a Grenadian, who calls himself Black Flash, a practitioner of Kung Fu who's bound for the land of opportunity in order to take Hollywood by storm as the new Bruce Lee, or enlist in the United States Navy, it's all one to him. The owner is a painter, William, a man with whom I have for many years shared dreams of passages trans-Atlantic and Pacific, a romantic on his third or fourth reading of Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone Around the World.*

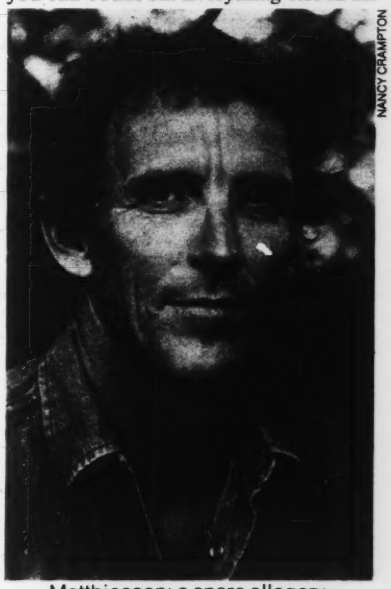
It was William's idea that we wander north from San Juan, putting into ports in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and the Bahamas. Zack didn't want to screw around. For him, bringing a sailboat north, or returning it south, is

so much long-haul trucking: the quicker the rig gets where it's going, the more it can be put to the use it was meant for, bringing home the bacon. Black Flash had a rendezvous with one or another destiny, and was in no humor to poke from place to place. I, for my own reasons, was in a hurry, so we decided to go Zack's way. Accordingly, we snuck under Morro Castle one afternoon with the southeastern trades blowing hard, and set out downhill on a broad reach north-northwest, right on home. After Puerto Rico dropped off the horizon astern, we saw no land and only six boats again for five days and nights.

It was a simple passage, without much need to change or even handle sail. And so I occupied myself during the long silent stretches with a sea novel, *Far Tortuga,* a book by the naturalist and novelist Peter Matthiessen about turtle fishermen out of Grand Cayman Island, sailing the desolate and dangerous waters off the coast of Honduras and Nicaragua. Copm Raib Avers, the master of the schooner *Lillias Eden,* has sailed past his time, which is the "back time," before tourists became an industry for bright young men, before such boats as the *Eden* went to sea with cut-down rigs and twin diesels, before the turtles were fished out. The captain, bitter and sardonic, finds himself at sea in late April with a crew of eight: "A thief, two drunkards and a murderer—all de rest is merely idiots!" They merit the rubric motley, a fugitive and derelict gang made up of men of many colors and all weaknesses, and their voyage is doomed, and they know it. Copm Raib blames "modern time, mon" for the depressed state of his fortune, prospects and self-regard.

And the boat on which I sailed as I read, with its Dutch-built fiberglass hull, with its hot and cold pressure water, with thousands of dollars worth of electronic navigational aids, with electric refrigeration, is modern time, stem to stern, and so I thought would like a mirror reflect a reversed image of the *Eden,* just as *Ándale*'s crew, three worldly fellows and a devotee of Kung Fu movies, would demonstrate what had become of the back-time seamen for whom Copm Raib longs. But the mirror didn't work, or it distorted, and instead of reading about exotic, ruined men at an exotic practice, I found myself reading about the four of us, at our works and days. For the central fact of the situation of any man at sea, anywhere, is that there are only a couple of things he can count on: that the sun will rise in the east and set in the west, and that he will find himself before long in trouble, and that however bad the trouble gets, it can always get worse, there is no limit to how hard the wind can blow, or how much mischief the sea can make.

Copm Raib tells his son, aboard the ill-fated *Eden,* of one other constant: "See, Buddy? Dat de north star. Goes very bright, and den she fades again, every four days. Dat is one thing you can count on. Everything else in dis



NANCY CRAMPTON

Matthiessen: a spare allegory.

goddom world changin so fast dat a mon cannot keep up no more, but de north star is always dere, boy, de cold eye of it, watchin de seasons come and go . . . . It were watchin on de night dat you were borned, and it be watchin when dat night comes dat you die."

Far Tortuga is in form a log, not only of the last voyage of the *Eden* and her crew but of men's passage north toward their death. Every sea story is a kind of allegory: the figure of the captain and his crew, the ship as a planet adrift in the cosmos, the procedures invented to shore up fragile life against its brutal and patient antagonists, all these elements of a fable designed to instruct and to ward off the last bad news are above or at the surface of yarns without number. But Matthiessen comes at the matter head on, introducing his book with two lines from *Everyman:* "Death, Thou comest/When I had Thee least in mind." At sea it happens like this: "And just de day before, dem dat were drowned was settin dere just like you fellas, just settin dere thinkin about dere belly and scrotchin dere balls. Never had no idea at all what was comin down on dem. No idea at all."

So the crew serves as a kind of chorus, and looking on are a few immutables, Polaris and the sun, and the sea that is unchanging only in its capricious and consequential changes. Matthiessen's narrative has been described by James Dickey as a work that "will certainly point the way that the English-speaking sensibility must and should go, from this book on." I wish that Dickey had expanded on his dust-jacket comments, because the great virtue of *Far Tortuga* is not its applicability to the formal arrangements of other fictions but its unique suitability to a fable about the sea. Matthiessen has spoken in an interview of the influence upon his style in *Far Tortuga* of his Zen training and affection for Japanese *sumi* painting and *haiku* poetry. The book is spare, with utterances and ruminations carefully designed on the page, plenty of white space between them to suggest the passage of time, and the emptiness of the sky and sea. Such signals as *he said* and the *captain replied* have been abandoned, and the book makes no use of conceits of any kind, relying on the found poetry derived from precise and necessary descriptions of objects and weathers, and the locutions of the log.

The narrative is disfigured by Matthiessen's odd decision to use dialect, which consists mostly of *dis* for *this, dere* for *their* and *there, dat* for *that.* There was no need for such an out-at-elbows device because he reproduces so perfectly the cadences of Cayman and Jamaican and Honduran speech, finding in each its singular music and idiom. But the novel otherwise achieves exactly what it meant to achieve, it laments the certain death of things still alive, and performs a ceremony of remembrance for things and men once alive and now dead. My copy of the book took an unexpected wave that broke over our transom 300 miles from land, and whipped us broadside to the sea till the sea decided as frivolously as it had toyed with us to let us be again, for a time. Its pages are still soggy, and its hard-board covers, once the color of a reef lit by high sun, are faded almost white. I'll keep the ruined artifact as a totem, and a record not only of people and waters I've never known and will never see, but of the passage I made reading it, no different than any sea passage in open water, mysterious, testing, noble, full of menace and fundamental.

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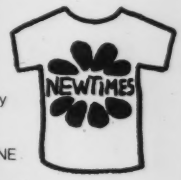

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Man on the run

Final Tribute

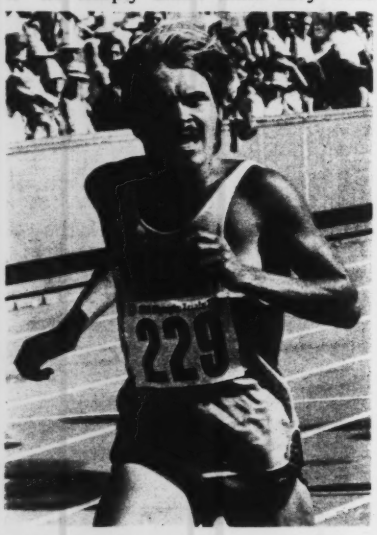
By Mark Goodman

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.
"To an Athlete Dying Young"
A. E. Housman

It used to be said, up in Coos Bay, that Steve Prefontaine could outrun an Oregon timber fire. Given the chance, I rather imagine Prefontaine would have tried to prove it; that is the kind of competitor he was. Running was all he knew, and he pursued it with a vengeance—quite literally, as he always seemed to be outraged about something. Said fellow runner Jon Anderson: "He's not like other distance runners. He's not quiet, not introspective. He can't relax. A 15-mile run in the woods makes me kind of mellow and satisfied. All it does for Pre is make him mad. Most distance runners find expression in easy running: we take comfort in that kind of personal experience. Pre's kind of running is always hard and straining and fierce."

That rather accurately describes Steve Prefontaine's brief 24 years. He was the James Dean of the track circuit, and not just for the fact that he wrapped himself up in a car a good 50 years before his time. Brooding, bristling, a fanatically loyal friend and an equally fanatical antagonist, Prefontaine would attack the U.S. Olympic Committee and the Amateur Athletic Union with the same swift savagery that won him every American record from 2,000 to 10,000 meters. I doubt seriously if he cried crocodile tears over the death last month of Avery Brundage, the obstructionist head of the Olympic Committee who was almost singlehandedly responsible for the American neologism "shamateurism." It was Prefontaine who announced—loudly, boldly and repeatedly—to a smug, self-righteous land that the Emperor had no clothes, that America's ludicrous rules regarding amateur athletics put her athletes at a disadvantage to the well-subsidized athletes of virtually every other nation.

The woods of Oregon breed what used to be called Rugged Individualism, and Prefontaine had nothing if not that. He could run like nobody's business and he most vehemently believed that it *was* no one's business but his own where he ran and against whom. "To hell with love of country," was the famous line that shocked generations of Americans weaned on John R. Tunis. "I compete for myself." Boy, did he ever mean it. At his death he faced suspension by the A.A.U. for his refusal to run on the national team against Soviet-bloc countries. Politics had nothing to do with it—he simply didn't think they were

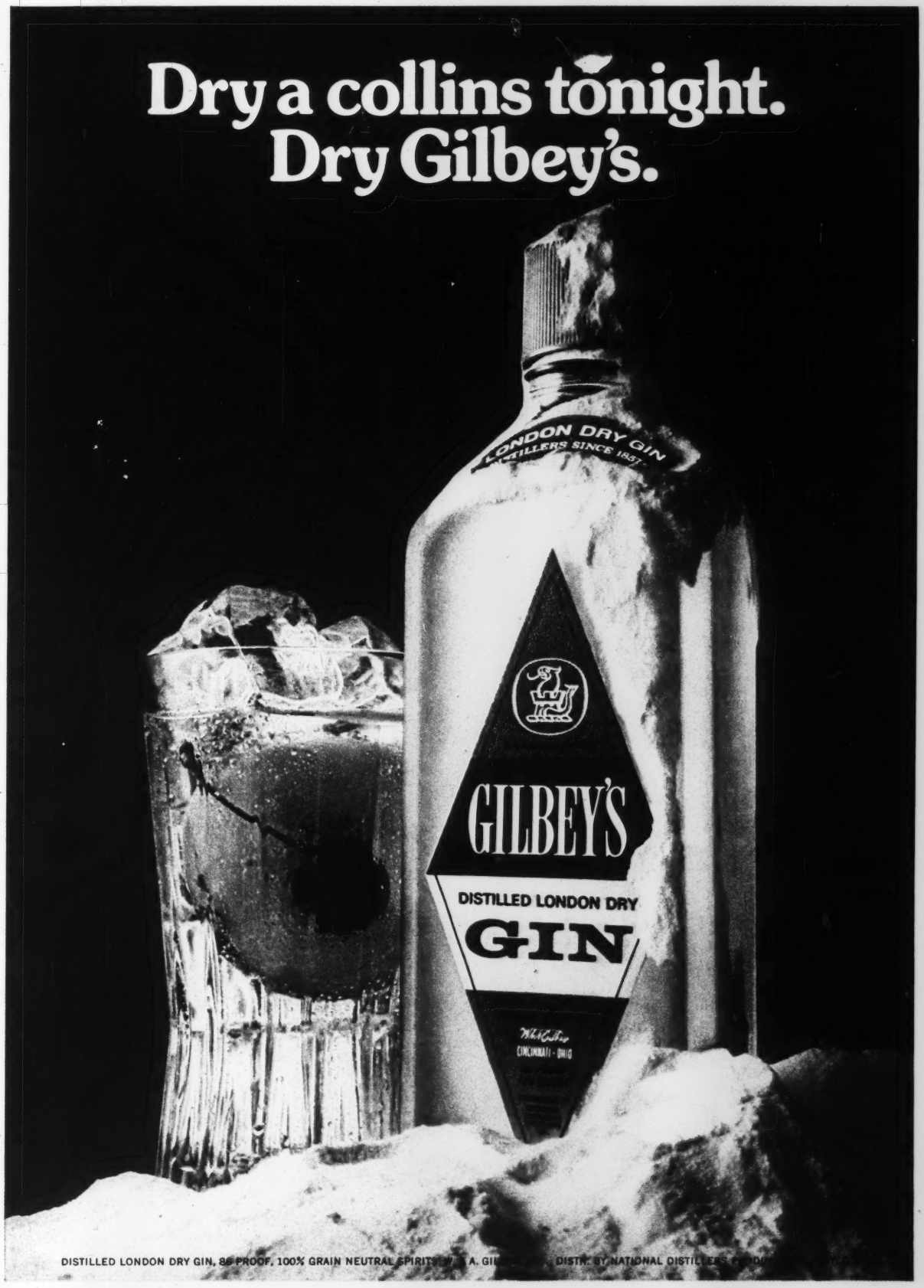


good enough ("like running against a bunch of high school kids" was the delicate way he phrased it to his pal Kenny Moore). His blatant calls for subsidies did not stem from greed—he turned down a $200,000 offer from the pro-track circuit because he wanted to beat the flying Finns and Belgians and Norwegians first. "What would I do with all that money?" he asked.

He might have spent a fair amount of it in bars. Excruciatingly honest, Prefontaine never hid his love of grain and hops from the public. Blessed with the constitution of a yak, he was known to carouse all night, sleep for an hour and then get up and run ten miles. When you're brought up with lumberjacks you drink with lumberjacks, and Prefontaine loved low-rent saloons, loved to fill a smoky room with his brimming personality and bursting confidence.

He did not always have such a surfeit of both. The only child of a Coos Bay carpenter and his German war bride, young Steve was by his own later admission a bit runty and a slow learner. He got on the high school football and basketball teams by scrap and spit, but he rarely roamed very far from the bench. However, he discovered he could run and run and run—and almost never get tired. By the time he graduated he was one of the most sought-after schoolboy athletes in the land. But there was only one college for him: the University of Oregon, a perennial track powerhouse. His thundering finishing kick and his penchant for playing to the gallery (he actually took victory laps, something your well-bred amateur just doesn't do) made him a celebrity by the end of his freshman year. So did the tirades with which he began to lash the A.A.U. and Olympic Committee. So did his curious off-campus activities—such as lecturing junior high kids on venereal disease or helping inmates at the state prison organize their sports program. As another runner, Frank Shorter, wrote: "He was always surprising you. It wasn't a calculated surprise, the way it is with some people who want to impress you. He did it, it was private and he kept it to himself. He didn't really want anybody else to know."

Let us be plain: there is nothing noble about the way Steve Prefontaine died. He got drunk and racked himself up. It is, however, a tragedy that he never got an Olympic medal or a world record. Nor will the American record books remember him for very long, since track marks are about as durable as Zsa Zsa's love. But no one who ever saw him driving down the back stretch, ripping every ounce of speed from his throbbing muscles, will ever forget this fabulous, ferocious young man who could run like an Oregon timber fire. ●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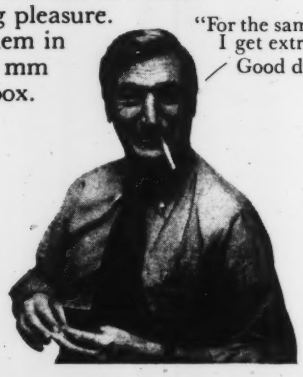

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